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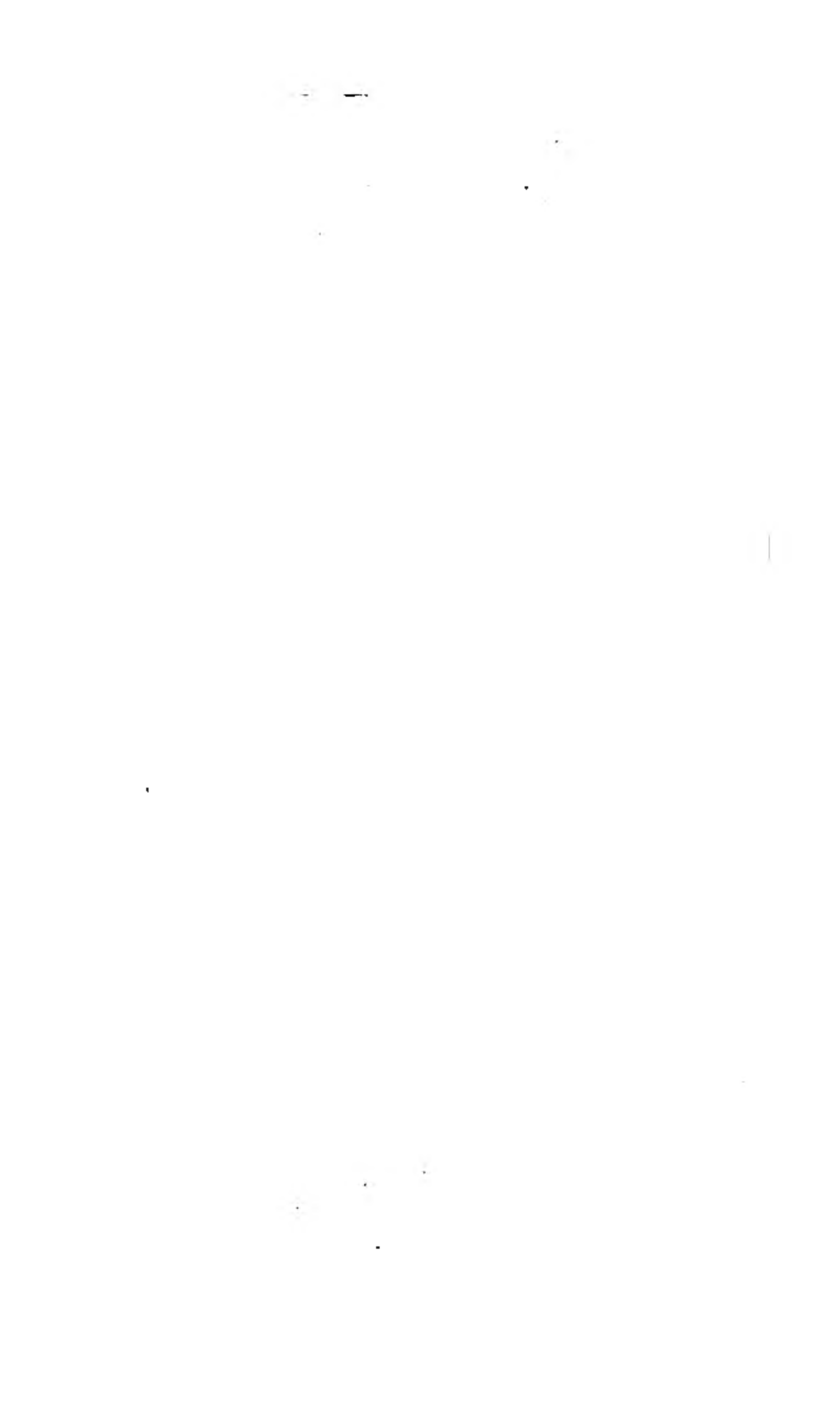
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SUNDAY MORNINGS
OR
CHRISTIAN TRUTH,
AS SET FORTH IN THE LITURGY.

BRIGHTON. HENRY S KING.

LONDON. HAMILTON ADAMS & CO.



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THE
YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S
UNDAY MORNINGS:
OR,
CHRISTIAN TRUTH
AS
SET FORTH IN THE LITURGY,
IN
SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN A MOTHER
AND HER CHILD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HAPPY FAMILY;" "SIMPLE RULES
FOR THOSE IN HUMBLE LIFE;" ETC. ETC.

A New Edition.

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PREFACE.

THE object of this little book is to explain, simply and clearly, and with ideas suited to the comprehension of the "Little Ones of Christ's Flock," the meaning of each part of the Service which they attend at Church.

It is very difficult for even grown persons to take an interest in, or to sit quietly while, anything is going on which they do not understand; and it is much more difficult for Children. The Author has, therefore, gone through the entire service, and endeavoured to explain each part, in the simple language she used with her own children; listening to their questions and remarks, relating anecdotes and narratives bearing on the subject, and unfolding the spirituality of our admirable Liturgy, by constant reference to God's Holy Word.

BRIGHTON,
December, 1852.

THE
YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S
SUNDAY MORNINGS.

DIALOGUE I.

Mamma.—I was sorry to observe my dear little Caroline very inattentive at church last Sunday ; she did not appear to be *thinking* of the words which she was repeating after the clergyman, but was looking about, and pulling off and putting on her gloves, and sometimes sitting down whilst others were standing, and standing whilst others were sitting, and seemed to have forgotten that she was in the house of God. Why was this, my dear child ? Was it right ?

Caroline.—No, mamma ; but I was tired, and it was very warm, and I do not understand what the clergyman says, and I am but a very little child, you know.

Mamma.—You can find many excuses for yourself, I see ; but suppose I were to say—Very well, as you are so soon tired and do not understand what you hear, because you are a little child, you had better remain at home, would you like it?

Caroline.—Oh no, mamma, I should be very sorry not to go to church. Pray, take me again, and I will try and be very quiet.

Mamma.—And I too should be very sorry not to take you with me, because God has commanded parents to “diligently teach”¹ their children his ways, and there are a great many parts of the Bible which prove that “*little children*” are to be brought to join in his service. I know you love to look for texts from

¹ Deuteronomy vi. 7.

the Bible, and I dare say you will feel more pleasure than you do now, in joining in the worship of God's house, when you find that even though you are a "little child" you may fulfil his commandments by so doing. Suppose we look now for all those parts in the Holy Scriptures in which we are told that *young children* were brought to worship the Lord.

Caroline.—Oh thank you, mamma. I shall like it very much, and I think I should be more attentive if I could understand what the clergyman says; will you, my dear mamma, talk to me about the Prayer-book as little Edward's² mamma did to him about the Bible?

Mamma.—I shall have much pleasure, my dear child, in endeavouring to make you *understand* what you *hear*, and you are quite right in wishing to do so. In the 14th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul says much of the

² The authoress of "the Young Christian's Sunday Evenings."

necessity of praying in a language which the people understand. He says, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue;" and in the same chapter he says, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also : I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." Happy am I then, that my little girl wishes to understand what she hears. Our blessed Saviour himself, in the parable of the sower and the seed, which we find in the 13th chapter of St. Matthew, gives an awful warning to those who hear without seeking to understand. He says, "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower; when any one heareth the word of the kingdom and *understandeth it not*, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown." Let *us*, then, my child, pray earnestly, that our "understandings may be opened that we may understand the Scriptures,"³

³ Luke xxiv. 45.

and become “wise unto salvation.”⁴ And now let us look for the texts which prove that your being a “little child” would not be an excuse for staying away from the worship of God, as it was the custom of God’s people always to take their “little ones” with them to hear the reading of the law ; and next Sunday morning I hope I may be able to show you some other texts, which will tell you *how* you should behave when in his holy temple. I have already reminded you of those verses in the 6th chapter of Deuteronomy, in which the Almighty commands parents to teach their children ; but this command refers to *private* instructions : “These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them *diligently* unto thy children, and shalt *talk* of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and

⁴ 2 Timothy iii. 15.

when thou risest up;”⁵ but I wish now more particularly to call your attention to the duty of attending *public* worship. Moses gives this commandment respecting the reading of the law, in the 31st chapter of Deuteronomy, “When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before *all* Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and *children*, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that *their children*, which have not *known any thing*, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God.”⁶ And we find in the time of Joshua, the people fulfilling this commandment: “There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the

⁵ Deut. vi. 7.⁶ Deut. xxxi. 11—13.

women, and the *little ones*, and the strangers that were conversant among them.”⁷ Again, we read of king Jehoshaphat, one of those kings of Judah, who “walked in the commandments of the Lord,” that upon an occasion when he was told a “great multitude” of his enemies were coming against him to battle, that he “proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah, they came to seek the Lord. And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their *little ones*, their wives, and their children.”⁸ And when the temple was rebuilt, on the restoration of the Jews to their country after their captivity in Babylon, we find Ezra also “assembling unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, women, and *children*.”⁹

⁷ Joshua viii. 35.

⁸ 2 Chron. xx. 3, 4, 13.

⁹ Ezra x. 1.

DIALOGUE II.

Mamma.—Well, my dear little girl, what is to be our occupation this morning, there are nearly two hours till church time?

Caroline.—You told me, mamma, last Sunday, that as I had now seen in the Bible, that Moses told even “little” children to hear the Word of the Lord read, I know that it is *my duty* to go to church, and that we should *this* morning look for those texts which are to *teach* us, *how* to behave in God’s house.

Mamma.—You are right, my love, and I dare say we shall find as much instruction on this subject as on every other. King David, who is called “the sweet

Psalmist of Israel,"¹ from the delightful psalms or hymns which he composed, says in that most beautiful of all his psalms, the 119th, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."² Meaning, that as a light shows a person how to walk in a dark place, so the Word of God shows us what we ought to do, when we are in the *darkness* of ignorance. But we have still higher authority than that of David, for going on all occasions to the Word of God, for guidance and direction, and we should be inexcusable if we did *not* do so, for our Saviour himself has told us, that it is by *that word*, we shall be judged at the last day. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."³ He also promises, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye *shall know* the truth, and the truth shall make you

¹ 2 Samuel xxiii. 1. ² Psalm cxix. 105.

³ St. John xii. 48.

free.”⁴ These verses may be a little difficult for you to understand every word of them, but they mean—I have given you the Bible, which is “my word,” to *teach you* the truth, and *I promise* (and my promise is never broken) that if you continue, that is, persevere in seeking for the truth, you *shall* know it; therefore, when the last day comes, when you stand before my throne to be judged—if you should say, you did not *know* what was right—I shall then remind you—the Bible would have told you the way, and you *had* the Bible. Let *us* then, my beloved child, remember, whenever we know not what to do, to turn to our Bible—we shall find, as St. Paul tells his beloved Timothy, who “from a child had known the Holy Scriptures,”⁵ that “they are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;” and that “*all* Scripture is given by inspiration

⁴ St. John viii. 31, 32. ⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.

of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ;” and may we, by the help and grace of God, by reading it, become “ perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Caroline.—We may be quite *certain* then, mamma, that we shall find many parts of the Bible that will teach us how to behave in God’s house ; because, as you say, Jesus *never* breaks his promise, and he *has promised* we *shall* know the truth.

Mamma.—Yes, my love, you are right. If we seek, we shall assuredly find the instruction we need. We will look for the texts as we did before, beginning with the book of Genesis. It was not until Adam and Eve had *sinned* that they felt *fear* ; before that sad time they had *rejoiced* in the presence of the Almighty ; but such is the dreadful nature of sin, the natural consequence of it is to produce misery, shame, and dread ; and had not the mercy

of the Almighty devised a plan by which these poor guilty unhappy beings might still be forgiven, they would for ever have been driven from his presence. He gave his own Son to die for them, and for *his sake*, forgave them. They were no longer worthy to come before him, but Jesus Christ, in his great love and pity, undertook the office of Mediator and pleaded for them : “ For my sake, my Father, receive the prayers of these unhappy people ; for my sake, forgive them.”

Caroline.—A mediator—I do not understand what a mediator is.

Mamma.—I will endeavour to make it plain to you. Suppose you had been in your papa’s room, and he had given you leave to play there, on *condition* that you did not touch something to which he attached a value. For a time you might be happy, and not think of disobeying ; but we will suppose you forgot to pray for God’s help to keep you from tempta-

tion, and papa leaving the room, you thought you might *unseen* disobey him. He returns and finds you touching what he had told you *not* to touch, and very justly says, "You must not play in my room again. Go, you are a disobedient little girl." With sorrow and shame you go away. By and by, Amelia says, "Let us go and play in papa's room." "I cannot go," you reply, "I have been disobedient, and papa will not allow me to go there again." Your sister says, "I will go and tell papa that you are sorry, and then he will perhaps let you come." Amelia would thus be a mediator between papa and you.

Caroline.—I understand now, mamma.

Mamma.—The first thing then that we learn from the Bible is this, that, from the time that Adam and Eve by their disobedience brought sin and death into the world, there has been but *one way*, by which we can come before God. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life:

no man cometh to the Father but by me ;”¹ and in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, we have it beautifully explained to us, that it was because Abel offered his sacrifice to the Lord, through *faith* in Jesus, that God accepted his offering, and that “ he being dead yet speaketh :”² that means, *his example* tells us what we ought to do to be also accepted ; we must, as he did, and all the other holy men whom St. Paul tells us, “ obtained a better country, even a heavenly,”³ and whom he calls “ a cloud of witnesses,” “ look unto Jesus” as “ the author and finisher of our faith.”⁴ Now, my dear child, what is the first thing we learn from the Bible, as to the *manner* in which we are to come to God ?

Caroline.—That we should come as Abel did ?

Mamma.—Yes, my love, and it is in *this*, that though he is dead he yet speaks

¹ John xiv. 6.

² Heb. xi. 4.

³ Heb. xi. 16.

⁴ Heb. xii. 1, 2.

to us, saying, “Go and do thou likewise.” We should indeed as St. Paul tells us, “Draw near to God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,⁵ through Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose blood speaketh better things than that of Abel.”⁶

Caroline.—I do not quite understand what that means, mamma.

Mamma.—I dare say it does appear to you difficult to understand, and I am not sure that I can explain it to you properly, but I will endeavour to do so. The Bible tells us that God had been pleased to *show* Abel that he accepted of “his offering ;” and St. Paul, in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, reminds us, that it was because it was offered through “faith” in *that* blood, of which Abel’s sacrifice of the lamb was only a type or figure. If, therefore, the blood which Abel offered had power to “sanctify him,” and obtain for him “a witness

⁵ Heb. x. 22.

⁶ Heb. xii. 24.

that he was righteous,"⁷ how much more shall the blood⁸ of Jesus, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, "speak better things" to us. I was talking to your dear brother Frederick one day, upon this subject, and he says, he thinks this text may be explained as also meaning the blood of Abel called, as we are told, for vengeance: "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground, and now art thou cursed from the earth"⁹—but the blood of Jesus, "speaketh to *us better things*," it calls for mercy. "Ye are not come to the mount that burned with fire, when so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God

⁷ Heb. xi. 4. ⁸ Heb. ix. 14. ⁹ Gen. iv. 10, 11.

the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not *we* escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven.”¹ Now we may take both these explanations, for they do not contradict each other, and may thus understand the whole passage. Let Abel, though dead, yet speak to us, teaching us, that, as God accepted his sacrifice, because it was offered up through “faith” in the blood of Jesus, so we, coming in *that faith*, may also be accepted, for that blood cleanses from all sin, and calls only for mercy, speaking, therefore, better things than that of Abel, which cried from the ground for vengeance. I have tried to make it as plain to you as I can,

¹ Heb. xii. 18—26.

but though I *feel*, as if I understood it myself, I find it difficult to explain. But we have not time *now* to look for more texts,—we must go to church, and when you are there, remember the promise of our Lord, “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.”² Pray, therefore, in the name of Jesus, that the Father may please to give you an understanding heart, and lead and guide you into all truth. We cannot of *ourselves*, do any thing right or good, but we are told to pray—“always to pray,” and are *promised* that our prayers *shall be heard*;—kneel down, therefore, when you go into church, and say, “O Lord, though I am but a little child, help me to serve thee with all my heart and soul and strength, and accept my services for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.”

² John xvi. 23.

DIALOGUE III.

Caroline.—Another “happy Sunday,” mamma,—another week has passed. You told me last Sunday, that as we are not worthy to come to God *ourselves*, we must offer all our prayers in the name of Jesus, and that for the sake of his blood, which is better than that shed by Abel, whose offering God “*accepted*,” we may come “boldly,” (does not that mean without *fear*, mamma?) to God.

Mamma.—Certainly, my dear child, it does mean that we are not to feel “afraid,” as Adam was when he “hid himself,” because though we are like him guilty before God, by saying our prayers in the name of Jesus, instead of our own, it is Jesus himself that prays

for us; but when we remember that, the “high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy,”¹ and whom the “heaven of heavens cannot contain,”² is “in very deed” present, surely it is proper and natural to feel as Jacob did, when he awoke from “*that happy dream*” which you are so fond of hearing read to you before you go to sleep. “How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, this is the gate of heaven.”³ When Abraham, whom the Almighty condescended to honour so much, that St. James calls him “the friend of God,”⁴ knew that he was in the more *immediate* presence of God, (for though God is always present with us, there are *times* when he vouchsafes more especially to reveal himself to us,) he “fell on his face;”⁵ and when the Lord appeared to Moses, as we read in the third chapter of

¹ Isaiah lvii. 15.² 2 Chron. vi. 18.³ Gen. xxviii. 17. ⁴ Jam. ii. 23. ⁵ Gen. xvii. 3.

Exodus, the Lord himself told him that reverence and humility were becoming: “Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”⁶

Caroline. — What does that mean, mamma? We do not put off our shoes when we go to church—ought we to do so?

Mamma.—It alludes to the custom observed among the Eastern nations, and which is in practice at this very day, of taking off the shoes as a mark of respect. When an inferior enters the house of a superior, he leaves his slippers or shoes at the door; and mamma herself once saw at a Mahometan festival a sort of shrine, dedicated to some idol, into which no one was permitted to enter without taking off his shoes.

Caroline.—What is a shrine, mamma?

Mamma.—The meaning given for the word in the dictionary is “a case in

⁶ Exodus iii. v.

which something sacred is deposited," but as the word is never used in the Bible in connexion with any thing which *Christians* consider "sacred," and the only time it is mentioned at all is when St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, tells us that "a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines for the image of the heathen goddess Diana,"⁷ when he found that Paul preached against these idols, was so afraid that every one would believe Paul, and that he should not have any more employment in making shrines, that he raised a tumult in the city against Paul. I should, therefore, say the word shrine means that spot in which an idol or image, which some people "ignorantly worship,"⁸ is placed; and our own beautiful poet Milton, seems to have thought the same, for he says,

" They often placed
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines, abomi-
 nations!
 And with cursed things His holy rites profaned."

⁷ Acts xix. 24.

⁸ Acts xvii. 23.

But we have staid too long among the “shrines,” let us return to the “sanctuary.” We are told in the Bible, that when the Almighty declared himself to Moses, saying, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,”⁹ that “Moses hid his face ; for he was afraid to look upon God.” “Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and *reverence* my sanctuary,”¹ is the command of the Almighty himself. “Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling,”² says David ; and you must never forget that the words of David, and of all the other “Holy men of God,” were given by inspiration from God, for “they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”³ In another psalm, David says, “Let all the earth *fear* the Lord : let all the inhabitants of the world stand *in awe* of Him.”⁴ “Sanc-

⁹ Exodus iii. 6.¹ Levit. xix. 30.² Psalm ii. 11.³ 2 Peter i. 21.⁴ Psalm xxxiii. 8.

tify the Lord of Hosts himself; let *Him* be your *fear*, and let Him be your dread,"⁵ says Isaiah; and in Jeremiah we find these words: "Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not *tremble at my presence*, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?"⁶ We might find many more texts, but these will suffice to show, that though we may in humble confidence approach the Almighty as "our Father," we must remember also to "hallow his holy name;" and, as St. Paul tells us in the 12th chapter of the Hebrews, 28th and 29th

⁵ Isaiah viii. 13.

⁶ Jeremiah v. 20—22.

verses, “ have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear : for our God is a consuming fire.”

DIALOGUE IV.

Mamma.—What makes my dear little girl look so bright and happy this morning?

Caroline.—Because, mamma, I think I have learnt a text that will show us that we *ought* to be happy and joyful when we are going to the house of God. You have taught me, that we are not worthy to go to God ourselves, but that we are to ask Him to hear us for Jesus' sake, and that when we remember how great and glorious, and holy he is, we should worship him, with "reverence and godly fear," and last Sunday, I was very attentive, and I heard Mr. — say, "Serve the Lord with gladness : come before his presence with singing ;"¹ and I have

¹ Psalm c.

learnt another verse of the same psalm, “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

Mamma.—Yes, my precious child, you are right, we are commanded to be joyful—to “rejoice always,”² and I am much pleased to see you begin to find pleasure in the service of the sanctuary, and remember texts you hear there, but it would take up a long time, and keep us from the subject we are now undertaking—which is to endeavour to understand the prayers of the Church—if we were to find all the texts in the Bible upon the command to utter praises and thanksgiving; boundless are the mercies we receive, and boundless should be our thankfulness. We must select a few, as we have done on the former days, both from the Old Testament and the New. There is a most striking and awful passage in the 28th chapter of

² Philippians iv. 4.

Deuteronomy : Moses has been promising to the Israelites in the name of the Lord that they shall be blessed in everything they undertake, if they “hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God ;” but he denounces curses upon them in case they hearken *not*, and he adds, “And they shall be upon thee for a sign, and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever ; *Because* thou servedst not the Lord with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things.”³ The psalms abound with thanksgivings and praises. Let us read a few : “But let all those that put their trust in thee *rejoice* : let them ever *shout* for *joy*, because thou defendest them : let them also that *love* thy name be *joyful* in thee.”⁴ “Be glad in the Lord, and *rejoice*, ye righteous : and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.”⁵ “But let the righteous be glad ; let them *rejoice* before

³ Deuteronomy xxviii. 46, 47.

⁴ Psalm v. 11.

⁵ Psalm xxxii. 11.

God : yea, let them *exceedingly rejoice*.”⁶
 “ Sing aloud unto God our strength :
 make a joyful noise unto the God of
 Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither
 the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the
 psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the
 new moon, in the time appointed, on our
 solemn feast-day.”⁷ “ Lift up your
 hands in the sanctuary, and bless the
 Lord.”⁸ “ Ye that stand in the house of
 the Lord, in the courts of the house of
 our God, Praise the Lord ; for the Lord is
 good : sing praises unto his name : for it is
 pleasant.”⁹ “ Praise ye the Lord : for
 it is good to sing praises unto our God ;
 for it is pleasant ; and praise is comely ;”¹
 or, as it is translated in our Prayer-book,
 “ Yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is
 to be thankful.” Isaiah says, “ For the
 Lord shall comfort Zion ; and he will
 make her wilderness like Eden, and her

⁶ Psalm lxxviii. 3.⁷ Psalm lxxxi. 1, 2, 3.⁸ Psalm cxxxiv. 2.⁹ Psalm cxxxv. 2, 3.¹ Psalm cxlvii. 1.

desert like the garden of the Lord ; *joy* and *gladness* shall be found therein, *thanksgiving*, and the voice of melody.”²

And again, “ Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord to *serve him*, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that *keepeth* the *Sabbath* from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant ; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them *joyful* in my house of prayer.”³ Many similar passages might be found in the Prophets, but we will now look to the New Testament. “ Rejoice always,” says St. Paul : “ and again I say, Rejoice.”⁴ “ The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace.”⁵ “ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and *joy* in the Holy Ghost.”⁶ In short, when we remember the “ abundant mercies we

² Isaiah li. 3.

³ Isaiah lvi. 6, 7.

⁴ Philippians iv. 4.

⁵ Galatians v. 22.

⁶ Romans xiv. 17.

receive through Christ," we ought indeed to feel, as St. Peter so beautifully expresses it," "Whom having not seen, we love; and in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we *rejoice* with *joy* unspeakable, and full of glory."

In the Acts of the Apostles we are told of one who had just heard the word of the Lord preached, that "he went on his way rejoicing;"⁸ and surely we too ought to rejoice when we assemble together in the house of the Lord; but I will give you some verses to read on this subject, and when you have read them, you may get ready for church:—

"He went on his way Rejoicing."

"Rejoicing, aye, Rejoicing went he on,
For he had heard the words of peace and joy;
Upon the sacred page the light had shone,
And every doubt and every fear is gone,
And nothing can annoy.

"And now he *understands* the words he reads,
The Son of God has left his Father's throne;

⁷ 1 Peter i. 8.

⁸ Acts viii. 39.

Amazing fact ! upon the cross he bleeds ;
For guilty man the guiltless Saviour pleads,
‘ Lord, let my blood atone.’

“ And he, e’en he, had mercy sought and found,
 For Him had died, that ‘ Just and Holy One,’
And now, tho’ desert was the scene around,
To tell to other lands the joyful sound,
 Rejoicing, rode he on.

“ Why then, oh ! why am *I* with grief oppress’d ?
 Are not the same bright promises mine own ?
Shall earthly cares weigh down a spirit blest
With hope of entering into heavenly rest,
 Where sorrow is unknown ?

“ Is not the sacred page to thee unsealed ?
 Mercy and love displayed in every line ?
And ‘ life and immortality’ revealed,
While *faith* thy soul from every ill shall shield,
 With panoply divine.

“ Wake then, my soul ! shake off these idle fears ;
 ‘ Rejoice always,’ ‘ again I say, Rejoice ;’
‘ In every thing give thanks,’ dry up thy tears,
Let joy and peace employ thy future years,
 Glad songs thy voice.”

DIALOGUE V.

Mamma.—Having now, my dear child, found from the Scriptures, *first*, that we are to come unto God, trusting for acceptance only through the merits of our Saviour, not in our own righteousness; *secondly*, in a spirit of prayer and supplication—for our Saviour himself repeated the command given formerly by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people;”¹ *thirdly*, with “reverence and godly fear;” “the Lord is in his holy temple,”² says Habakkuk, “Let all the earth keep silence before him;” and *lastly*, with

¹ Isaiah lvi. 7, also Matthew xxi. 13, Mark xi. 17, Luke xix. 46.

² Habakkuk ii. 20.

the voice of praise and thanksgiving, “singing and making melody in our hearts before the Lord;”³ we may now go to the service itself, that beautiful form of sound words and doctrine which our Church has appointed to be read. It is called the book of Common Prayer, because it contains *such* prayers, as all those assembled together to worship must *feel* are suitable to their common wants and infirmities; and, therefore, ought with united hearts and voices to be in *common* offered up. Do you remember how it begins?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, with texts from different parts of the Bible; but the clergyman does not read them all, but sometimes one, sometimes another.

Mamma.—If you will read the sentence printed in what are called italic letters, placed before the texts, and also in several other places, and which are intended as instructions, how the parts

³ Ephesians v. 19.

which follow should be read, you will see that it directs that the ministers shall say with a loud voice *one* or *more* of these sentences from the Scripture. These directions are called “Rubrics.”

Caroline.—What does rubric mean, Mamma ?

Mamma.—Red, my love, because they used formerly to be printed in *red letters*. The word rubric, as you will find in the dictionary, being so called from a Latin word, meaning red. Now read the sentences ; I never hear them without thinking of the beautiful consistency of our Church with the doctrines of Scripture, and imagine, our good old reformers remembered that John the Baptist was sent *first* to “*Prepare* the way of the Lord,”⁴ by calling to “repentance,” which must indeed be the *foundation* of our religion. “They that be whole,”⁵ says our Saviour, “need not a physician, but they that are sick.” Those

⁴ Luke iii. 3, 4.

⁵ Matthew ix. 12.

persons then, if there *can* be such, who feel that they are *perfectly* holy, just, and pure, and have never, even in word or thought, committed sin, so that they may come before God, “who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,”⁶ and claim as their *right* a reward in the day of judgment, are those *alone* who can hear without joy and thankfulness these beautiful sentences calling *us* to “*repentance*,” and assuring us, “that God willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness, and live;” and that “a broken and contrite heart he will not despise.”⁷ “Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house,”⁸ says the Almighty to Jeremiah, “And proclaim *there* this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and

⁶ Habak. i. 13.⁷ Psalm li. 17.⁸ Jer. vii. 2, 3.

I will cause you to dwell in this place.” In the exhortation which follows the sentences the clergyman appears, as it were, to proclaim to *us*, that have just “entered into the gates to worship the Lord,” the same message from the mouth of the Lord himself. He reminds us that the Scriptures in “sundry” (that is, many) “places,” call upon us to acknowledge our sins with humility and lowliness, that we may “by his infinite goodness and mercy” obtain forgiveness, and that though we ought *always* to do so when we pray to God, we should more especially confess, before and with those who are “assembled together” with us, how utterly unworthy we are “of the great benefits that we have received.” He, therefore, as “an ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech us by Him, prays us in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God,”⁹ and accompany him with our voices in an

⁹ 2 Cor. v. 20.

humble confession of our sinfulness,
“unto the throne of the heavenly grace.”

Caroline.—I understand *now*, mamma, *we* are not to *say* the words beginning “Dearly beloved,” but to *listen* attentively, because the clergyman is speaking to us a message from God; and we are to join our voices to his, at the prayer beginning, “Almighty and most merciful Father.”

Mamma.—Yes, my love; but it is time now to get ready for church, that we may not miss, by being late; this message from God, as if we were indifferent to the glad and joyful tidings it brings to us; and while we go I will teach you these pretty lines:—

“How beauteous are the feet of those who bear
Mercy to man, glad tidings to despair;
Far from the mountain tops they lovelier seem
Than moonlight dews, or morning’s rosy beam;
Sweeter the voice than spell or hymning sphere:
And listening angels hush their harps to hear.”

DIALOGUE VI.

Mamma.—Let us now, my dear Caroline, before we begin to read the confession, see what the Rubric tells us. The prayer which follows is called a General Confession, “and is to be said of the whole congregation after the minister, *all* kneeling.” We shall find throughout both the Old and New Testament, that the people of God fell on their knees when they prayed. “O come, let us worship, and fall down; and *kneel* before the Lord our Maker.” Even our Saviour himself set us this example. In the garden of Gethsemane, he “*kneeled down* and prayed;” but this duty is so plainly inculcated, that one can hardly imagine a person can really

feel that they are *praying*, unless they are also in an attitude of supplication. Of course, when prevented kneeling by bodily infirmity, we should acquire a habit of lifting up the *heart* in prayer, though the feeble knees *cannot* bow down ; but when we are acknowledging ourselves to be guilty and “miserable offenders,” should we not *feel*, that we are not worthy, “even so much as to lift our eyes unto heaven,” and with deep humility of heart and voice follow the clergyman in repeating, “Almighty and most merciful Father ; we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep ? ”

Caroline.—I think I know what part of the Bible, *that* is taken from. Our Saviour says, “I am the good shepherd, and my sheep know my voice,”—that means good people ; so that, to wander and stray like a lost sheep, means, I suppose, that we have been naughty, and left our good shepherd, Jesus.

Mamma.—Yes, my love; and in a great many parts of the Old Testament you will find the same expressions used. To make everything plain for us to understand, the Almighty was good enough to order the prophets and holy men of old to describe the things which we *cannot* see by things we *can*. So, to make the people of Israel understand his goodness and mercy, in watching over them and leading them, and giving them all things good for them, and keeping them from evil, he condescends to call himself their shepherd. The people of Israel were, at first, only a pastoral people, dwelling in tents, and their possessions were principally in large flocks of sheep and cattle. They could understand, therefore, that the duty of a shepherd was to be watchful over the sheep, and to keep them from straying or wandering out of their sight, in a country where they were surrounded by wild beasts. David says, “The Lord is

my shepherd ; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures : He leadeth me beside the still waters.”¹ Again, in the 80th Psalm, he thus addresses the Almighty : “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock.” “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd :” says Isaiah : “he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.”² The people are frequently spoken of as sheep : “All we like sheep,” says Isaiah, “have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ;”³ and I should think it was this very text, that was in the thoughts of those good persons who wrote this confession ; as they were careful to make the prayers as much as possible like the Bible ; for we find that the next sentence after “we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,” is, “we have followed too much the devices and desires of our *own*

¹ Psalm xxiii. 1.² Isaiah xl. 11.³ Isaiah liii. 6.

hearts.” We then acknowledge that we have offended against “the holy laws of God, and that we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us.”

Caroline.—What does *that* mean, mamma? for I can understand that it does *not* mean, that we are all sick or ill; for that would not be true.

Mamma.—For the same reason which I explained to you before, to make us understand things we *cannot see*; namely, *spiritual* things, by those which we *can see*—*natural* things. The prophets and Scripture writers frequently compare sin and the wretchedness it brings upon the soul, to the misery which sickness occasions to the body: “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores,”⁴ says

⁴ Isaiah i. 5, 6.

Isaiah, speaking of the sinfulness of the whole nation of Israel; and perhaps *this* very verse was in the minds of *our* reformers, when they made the whole congregation exclaim, “there is no health in us.” Having then made this sad confession, and I hope felt it too, we proceed to implore for “mercy,” as, “miserable offenders;” to plead the promises given us of remission of sins, upon repentance, by Christ himself, and for *his sake* to pray, that we may have grace to lead the remainder of our lives to his glory. All the congregation then say “Amen,” which is to express their earnest desire that it shall be so, or, “so be it.” “And all the people shall answer and say, Amen,” was the charge of Moses to the people of Israel; so we find it has always been the custom for the people to say Amen to those prayers which the priest offers up for them. The people having thus made confession of their sins, continue kneeling, as you will read in the Rubric, while the priest

pronounces the Absolution, or Remission of sins, to be read by him *alone*.

Caroline.—Why is it to be read by the priest alone ?

Mamma.—Read it, my love, and I think you will then understand why. “Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live, (and) *hath* given power and *commandment* to his *ministers*, to declare and pronounce to his people (being penitent) the absolution and remission of their sins ; *He* pardoneth and absolveth all them that *truly* repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.” This message of mercy, is indeed that Gospel, they, his ministers, are commanded to preach throughout all the world. These are “the glad tidings of great joy,” which they are to “teach to all nations.” “Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times

of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”⁵ “Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off,”⁶ says St. Peter in *his first Sermon*. The people having, therefore, just made a confession of their sinfulness, and pleaded the “*promises*, declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus;” the minister stands up, and delivers to them in the name of the Almighty a gracious declaration of pardon, which they should receive in silent gratitude; but having now with authority as an ambassador in *Christ’s stead*, delivered his message of mercy, he remembers, that he himself needs the same pardon, and he adds, “Wherefore let *us* beseech him to grant *us* true repentance, and His Holy Spirit, that those things may please him, which

⁵ Acts iii. 19.⁶ Acts ii. 38.

we do at this present ; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure, and holy ; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Caroline.—I understand now, mamma ; we should only join in the prayers, or thanksgivings, and *listen* when the clergyman is *telling us* anything in the name of God.

DIALOGUE VII.

Mamma.—We are now come to that part of the Liturgy at which the *Prayers* may be said to commence, and, therefore, most properly, begin with that taught us by our Lord himself. But let us now first look to the directions given us in the Rubric.

Caroline.—Mamma, I have a question to ask you first—you said, “the Liturgy;” what is the meaning of the word Liturgy?

Mamma.—It is derived from a Greek word, and means the act or work of prayer, and this *very* expression ought to convince us that we should not treat it as a mere *form* which we are only to listen to, but as an “act” in which we ourselves should join, as a *work* which we

should rejoice to perform. You may now, my love, read the directions before the Lord's Prayer.

Caroline.—"Then the minister shall kneel, and say the Lord's Prayer with an audible voice ; the people also kneeling, and repeating it with him, both here, and wheresoever else it is used in Divine Service."

Mamma.—There is one thing here to which I particularly wish to draw your attention, because, I am sorry to say, it is so much neglected. We are required by our Church to repeat *this* prayer, and also those sentences called the responses, in an *audible* voice. Oh, how different would be our temple worship, if with *one heart* and *one voice* we *together* breathed forth our prayers and uttered our thanksgivings. I do not think any one who has not heard it, could imagine how deeply affecting it is. Some years ago, before my little Caroline was born, I remember being present on an occasion,

when the responses were thus repeated, and I could not refrain from tears.

Caroline.—Oh, do mamma, tell me where it was, and all about it.

Mamma.—It was in the island of Mauritius ; we lived in the country, eight miles from the only Protestant church ; and as it frequently happened that we could not, either from the excessive heat or heavy rains, go to the church, we thought it better to have prayers at home. At first, only papa read the prayers, or your uncle Henry, and we had, as our congregation, only our own servants employed about the house ; but afterwards the chaplain came out sometimes, to read and preach to all the poor blacks employed by the Government, so we made one large congregation, and as we had neither church nor room large enough, the negroes were ranged all round on the terrace before the verandah, and we were, with the “strangers that were within our gates,” placed under the verandah. A

very beautiful avenue of large trees was in front of the house, and sheltered those who were on the terrace from the burning sun. They could not, poor creatures, read : nor had they ever thought much about religion, but your dear uncle Henry had taken some pains to explain to them the nature of the prayers, and had taught them to repeat the Lord's Prayer, and the responses after the commandments. The greater part of them being men, the sound of so many deep voices together, resembled, more than any thing else to which I could compare it, a distant roll of thunder, and was very beautiful and affecting ; and often when in church, in this more favoured land, when I have heard the single monotonous response of the clerk, I have lamented that so many real, zealous, and devoted Christians should, in *appearance*, be less anxious to give glory to God, than these poor ignorant, and scarcely better than heathen, blacks. But, now, let us

read the Lord's Prayer, which is very properly placed the first, as it was taught us by the Lord himself as the model upon which to form all our prayers. "After *this manner* pray ye." Can any thing be more full of grace and mercy than these two words: "Our Father?" We are not only permitted to come unto God, but are told that we may go to him as a "*Father*,"—and how many beautiful texts and promises of Scripture does this word recall to our minds. "Behold," says St. John, 1st verse, 3d chapter, 1st epistle, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."¹ "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to

¹ Psalm ciii. 13, 14.

them that ask Him.”² He is the Father of *all*, and, therefore, when we call Him “our Father,” we should remember the duties we owe to each other as brethren, so that even these two words may serve to recall to our minds those commands which, as our Saviour himself tells us, are the foundation of all that is written either in the law or the prophets: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength;” this is the first commandment, and the second is like, namely this, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:”³ the next words remind us, that this Father is “in heaven,” therefore, ALMIGHTY; and not only willing but able “to save to the uttermost all who call on Him.” Surely, then, the heart ought fully to join in the next petition, “Hallowed be thy name.” Oh, may we, my dear child, and *all* that call themselves by His name,

² Luke xi. 13.³ Mark xii. 30, 31.

be ever ready to give glory, and honour, and praise to *that* holy name for ever and ever; and not with our lips only, but in deed and in truth; “in all our ways acknowledging him,” remembering his gracious promises, “them that honour me I will honour,”⁴ and “whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation (or life) aright will I show the salvation of God.”⁵

⁴ 1 Sam. ii. 30.

⁵ Psalm l. 23.

DIALOGUE VIII.

Mamma.—Come, my dear child, we must be early this morning, for the next petition in the Lord's Prayer, will give us much to say and think about. I do not know whether my little Caroline will be able to understand all I have to say, nor can I myself comprehend the whole of the mysterious subject, but, with God's blessing, I will endeavour to make all that it is *necessary* for us to know, and practise as clear and plain as possible. The petition or prayer is, "Thy kingdom come." I might read to you a great many beautiful books that have already been written on this subject, but I prefer going on with the plan we have began, looking for texts ourselves, for, it will

enable us so much better to “understand the Scriptures,” finding one part thus explain another. From the very beginning, even to Adam himself, we know the promise was given of a “deliverer,” and that Satan, who is called “the prince of this world,”¹ should not *always* have the dominion in it, but one greater than he should subdue him. To Abraham is the promise repeated, and our Saviour himself tells us, that Abraham *understood* this promise to relate to him; for he says, “Your father Abraham saw my day: he saw it, and was glad.”² Jacob, on his death-bed, again assures the people of God, that a Saviour shall come, “who shall gather together all the nations,”³ and even Balaam, though he *resisted* the Holy Spirit of God, and preferred the “wages of iniquity,” was constrained by the Almighty to foretell, “that a Star should come out of Jacob, and a Sceptre should

¹ John xiv. 30. ² John viii. 56. ³ Gen. xlix. 10.

rise out of Israel,"⁴ "that shall have dominion." Moses again expressly foretells the same thing, and the Lord himself declares, that "*all the earth* shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."⁵ It would take us not a morning, but a week, to find all the passages in the Psalms and the Prophets concerning this "kingdom of Christ," and those parts of the New Testament, proving how far they have already been fulfilled, and what yet remains to be so. It is sometimes called the "kingdom of God," sometimes the "kingdom of heaven," sometimes the "kingdom of Christ, sometimes the "kingdom of grace;" but all these expressions mean the same thing, and all refer to some *future time of glory*;—for though by the birth of our Saviour we know the "kingdom of God," is indeed "come unto us,"⁶ and that every faithful follower of Christ is already a child of the kingdom of heaven, still we must

⁴ Num. xxiv. 17. ⁵ Num. xiv. 21. ⁶ Mark i. 15.

own that all the nations of the earth are not yet blessed in the knowledge of Him, and that “all the earth” is not yet “full of the glory of the Lord,” for many nations are still in darkness and idolatry: therefore we ought very earnestly to pray in *this* sense: “Thy kingdom come.” Hasten the time, oh Lord, bring on the day, when *all* nations, *all* people shall know and serve thee!

Caroline.—Oh! that will be indeed a happy time.

Mamma.—So happy, that nothing can exceed the beauty of those passages of Scripture which describe it. Whether they are to be understood *literally*, and that “the earth” is to be “renewed,” or made again as it was in paradise, so that even the wild beasts shall be harmless, and “the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and a young child shall lead them,”⁷ I cannot pretend to tell you; St. Peter says, “We look for a new

⁷ See Isaiah xi. lxv.

heaven and a *new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”⁸ If all these promises of *earthly* happiness and glory, are to be really and literally fulfilled, we shall *then* know and understand it, but at present I cannot undertake to *explain* it; I can only tell you my *own thoughts* upon this subject. Our Saviour says, that at his “*second coming*,” the world will be, as it “*was in the days of Noah*.”⁹ In that case the world can not be then in a state of peace and universal holiness, and St. Paul, and St. Peter also, speak of the *last days* as “*perilous times*,”¹ in which there will be “*scoffers*.”² There are many mysterious passages about the “*kingdom*” being “*given to the saints of the Most High*,”³ and about the saints “*reigning with him*,”⁴ which I do not pretend to understand; but when our Saviour himself says, “*My kingdom is not of this*

⁸ 2 Peter iii. 13. ⁹ Matt. xxiv. 37, Luke xvii. 26.

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 1. ² 2 Peter iii. 3. ³ Dan. vii. 27.

⁴ Rev. xx. 6.

world,"⁵ and when I read the numerous passages of Scripture alluding to his "second coming," particularly the parable of "the tares," which, as you remember our Lord tells us, in the 13th chapter of St. Matthew, are to be permitted to grow together with the wheat unto the *end* of all things, I think *none* of these *promises* of *glory*, whether spiritual only, as *I think* they are to be, or *literal* on a "new earth," as *some* expect, will be fulfilled till *after* his *second advent*, and, therefore, when I say, "Thy kingdom come," I pray for *that day*, "when He shall be revealed from heaven with all his holy angels with him."⁶ Let me read to you some of the beautiful parts of Scripture in which it is described: St. Paul tells the Thessalonians, to "comfort one another with these words,"⁷ and I cannot tell you, the very, very great comfort I derive from them. Our Saviour himself tells us, that

⁵ John xviii. 36. ⁶ 2 Thess. i. 7. ⁷ 1 Thess. iv. 18.

He will come a second time “in the clouds with power and great glory ;”⁸ and when the high priest asked him, “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed ?” he answered, “I am : and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”⁹ Let us now read the account of the ascension in the 1st chap. of the Acts of the Apostles : “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up ; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel ; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? this *same* Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” St. Peter too gives an awful account of the last day, but it is this passage from St. Paul’s Epistle to the

⁸ Mark xiii. 26.⁹ Mark xiv. 61, 62.

Thessalonians, to which I wish most particularly to draw your attention :
“ For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we *ever* be with the Lord ; wherefore, comfort one another with these words.”¹ Now, my precious child, when I find from the Bible itself, at least as I understand the passages that refer to this subject, that this world is to continue just as it is now, full of sin and sorrow till “ the Lord himself shall be revealed,” and that not *till then* will the kingdom of glory be fully shown ; I pray

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 15—18.

for the coming of "*that day*," when I say "*thy kingdom come*;" then, what we now see, as "through a glass darkly," we shall see and understand, and whatever may be ordained for the future, whether the spiritual glories of heaven or a renewed earth, it will not signify to us, "we shall ever be with the Lord." Let *us* then, my dear little girl, most earnestly pray, that "*that day*," which, from "the signs of the times," I cannot think to be far distant, "may not overtake us as a thief in the night;"² but let us remember our Saviour's promise, "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching."³ Do you remember one beautiful evening last summer—we were watching the lovely clouds, that were above the setting sun, and you said to me: "Oh, mamma, how beautiful! yet it would be more beautiful still, if among those clouds we could see Jesus coming with all his

² 1 Thess. v. 2. ³ Luke xii. 37.

holy angels with him ?”⁴ My little girl was watching *then*,—Is she watching now ? “ Watch and *pray*,” says our Saviour. Without the help of God’s Holy Spirit, we know we cannot think and do as we ought ; oh, forget not then to “ pray ” for that Spirit, that you may be enabled, like one of the “ wise virgins ” in the parable, when the cry is heard, “ Behold, the bridegroom cometh,”⁵ to go forth with joy to meet him.

Caroline.—Mamma, I love that hymn, which is about our Saviour’s coming—shall I say it ?

Mamma.—Yes, my love—I should like to hear it.

Caroline.—Lo, he comes with clouds descending,

Once for favoured sinners slain,

Thousand, thousand saints attending,

Swell the triumphs of his train :

Hallelujah !

Mortals catch their joyful strain.

Every eye shall now behold Him,

Robed in dreadful majesty ;

⁴ A fact.

⁵ Matt. xxv. 6.

Those who set at nought and sold Him,
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.

Blest redemption, long expected!
See, his solemn pomp to share,
All his saints, by man rejected,
Rise to meet Him in the air.
Hallelujah !
See the Son of God is there.

Yea, amen, let all adore Thee,
High on thine eternal throne ;
Saviour, worlds bow down before thee ;
Claim the kingdoms for thine own.
Hallelujah !
Come and make thy glories known.

DIALOGUE IX.

Mamma.—Four Sundays have passed, my dear child, and we have been prevented, not only from attending in the house of God, but also reading and talking together. Sickness has been among us—and my dear Caroline, and her dear sister and brother, and mamma herself, have been preserved through a severe illness—often fatal—and we may once more “assemble and meet together, to render thanks for the great benefits that He has conferred upon us,” and to say, I trust, from the heart, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” You may remember that our last conversation was, on that petition in the Lord’s Prayer which immediately precedes, or

goes before this sentence, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” Do you not think you can already understand this? Whose will do we pray may be done?

Caroline.—God’s will, mamma, and that it may be done as it is in heaven, that is, as the angels do it.

Mamma.—Yes, my love, and we can have no doubt that it is their delight to do His will. In the 103d Psalm, David says, “Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.” And what a happy world would even this world be, if every one, with cheerfulness, as the angels do, “Hearkened unto the voice of the Lord, and sought only to do what should be pleasing to Him.” Thus far the petitions in the Lord’s Prayer have related to our duty towards God, and

that his name might be hallowed, and the glory of His kingdom be increased. "Seek ye first," says our Saviour, "the kingdom of God and his righteousness." This His prayer, affords us a *practical* lesson on this text. It is the increase and glory of God's kingdom that we are taught to pray for before we ask for "our daily bread." "Give us this day our daily bread," is the next request, and every word of it affords us a lesson, and furnishes a subject for reflection. Oh Lord, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, we acknowledge that our dependence for all things is on thee; do *thou* "give us" what thou knowest to be requisite for us;—"this day"—and we are, by thus being told to pray for "*this day*" *only*, or "*day by day*," as St. Luke expresses it, reminded that we cannot tell what a day may bring forth;—to-day, we pray for what we need, the Almighty can alone know whether we may require it to-morrow;

but if we do come to another day, again we present ourselves before him, and acknowledge our entire dependence upon Him. And what are we to pray for? “our *daily bread*.” I have read that the Hebrews made use of the word “bread” to signify everything necessary to support life, “food and raiment;”¹ and with this, as St. Paul also tells us, as does this petition in our Lord’s Prayer, we are to be “content,” and leave all other things to be “added to us,” as God sees “best and most expedient for us.” What follows this?

Caroline.—“And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Mamma.—This is a most important prayer indeed, and deserves our most serious attention. Our Saviour himself tells us this, for after he had concluded the prayer, he adds this awful warning, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses,

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 8.

your heavenly Father will also forgive you : *but*, if ye forgive *not* men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Can we then dare to repeat this prayer with malice, or hatred, or ill-will towards any human being in our hearts ? Would it not be mockery to say, Forgive us *as* we forgive others, when we were conscious that we had not forgiven those who we thought had injured us ? And can we, sinful as we know we are, dare to go to rest, without praying that our sins may be forgiven ? Earnestly then, my precious child, pray for the grace of God to assist you diligently to cultivate that lovely disposition of mind, so beautifully described by St. Paul,² that not only "thinketh no evil," and "is not easily provoked," but "beareth all things, and endureth all things."

² Cor. xiii. 1.

DIALOGUE X.

Mamma.—I am glad to see you so soon ready this morning, my love.

Caroline.—I wish to hear, my dear mamma, what you will say about the next part of the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation."

Mamma.—What do you think it means yourself?

Caroline.—I think, mamma, it means, Do not let us be naughty; being tempted is being inclined to do something wrong—is it not?

Mamma.—Yes, my love, you have given, I think, the meaning which the word temptation has in this prayer, but in many parts of the Scriptures the word

is used for *trials*, which we know it is, not only the lot of every one born into this world of trial to meet with, but also that “it is good” for them to be thus “troubled.” In this sense, St. James¹ makes use of it when he says, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers (or many) temptations ; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience ;” and he adds, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” Our Saviour, therefore, would never have taught us to pray against what he tells us we must meet with in this world, “in the world ye shall have tribulation ;”² and in another place we are told that “we *must* through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”³ The meaning, therefore, of the word tempta-

¹ James i. 2, 3, and 12.

² John xvi. 33.

³ Acts xiv. 22.

tion in the Lord's Prayer must be "being led to do evil."

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, but then, it is *that* which has puzzled me. God wishes us to be good. How can He ever *lead* us to be naughty?

Mamma.—He can *not* ever, my dear child, be the author of evil; and here again, St. James teaches us, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."⁴ And he adds, "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every *good* gift and every *perfect* gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Yet, nothing can be done without His knowledge and permission. When we fall into sin, or listen to the suggestions of the "Evil

• ⁴ St. James i. 13, 14, and 16, 17.

One," Satan, who is also called the "Tempter," God may, in a certain sense, be said to permit it, because if He had not withdrawn his help from us Satan *could* have no power to "lead us, into temptation." But why then does he withdraw his help from us? Because *we* have forgotten to *seek* it. He tells us, and the promise is quite plain and clear, "Seek, and ye *shall* find,"⁵ If we then, who must know from our own hearts, even if we had not been told so by the Word of God, "that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves,"⁶ neglect to seek *that* strength which it has been promised "*shall be sufficient*" for us, how can we expect not to fall, when we are "led into temptation?"⁷ "Watch and pray," said our Saviour, to his *sleeping* disciple, "that ye enter not into temptation." Now all these things were written for our instruction: God has told us, that our hearts

⁵ Matt. vii. 7. ⁶ 2 Cor. iii. 5. ⁷ Matt. xxvi. 41.

are evil, that "the flesh is weak," and that in addition to this, "our adversary the devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."⁸ But, He has also told us, that *He* will enable us to overcome them *all*, if we seek his help and put our trust in Him, and such is the meaning of this petition in our Lord's Prayer, "Let us not be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil, or the evil one." As mamma does not understand Greek, she cannot tell you whether the original word translated *but*, might be read *or*, but if it might (and we will ask uncle Edward what he thinks about it), she would say it means, "Let us not be led into temptation, or," if, while we continue in this evil world, it is needful that we should be tempted and tried, "deliver us from the *evil* of such a temptation." Satan may indeed, be allowed to tempt us, but *we* need not fear, for we know that "*thine*

⁸ 1 Peter v. 8.

is the *kingdom*, the *power*, and the *glory*, for ever and ever. Amen."

Caroline.—Mamma, the Lord's Prayer does not always end with those words; sometimes it finishes at "deliver us from evil."

Mamma.—Yes, my love, the words "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory," are called a doxology, or form of giving glory to God; and they are generally added when the subject which precedes the prayer calls for our praise: they are taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, vi. 13. The short sentences that follow are called Responses, because the people *answer* the priest. And here, again, our Church follows the Bible. It was the custom of the Jews to repeat their Psalms, "by course," which means in turn; the early Christians did the same, and our Church has most wisely followed the example; for, if the people *did* respond as *they ought*, how striking, and how beautiful would it

render the service. The two first sentences are taken from the 51st Psalm, "O Lord, open thou our lips; and our mouths shall shew forth thy praise."⁹ The others also are from the Psalms, "O God, make speed to save us. O Lord, make haste to help us." Here you see we acknowledge as we ought to do our own helplessness. "Open *thou* our lips, O Lord, and then shall our mouths praise thee. Do thou, Lord, haste to help us, that we may praise thee as we ought to do." Now read the Rubric.

Caroline.—"Here, all standing up, the priest shall say"—

Mamma.—The priest and the people have been kneeling to offer ~~the~~ their prayers and confess their sins, but now when they are going to utter praises and thanksgivings they stand, and it seems most natural and proper to do so. There are a great many verses in the Bible

⁹ Psalm li. 15.

which prove that it was the custom among the Jews. What I said before about kneeling when we pray, applies to standing when we read or sing the praises of the Lord, and none but the sick, infirm, or very aged, should sit down at this part of the service. Having now made our humble confession of sin and misery, and received the gracious message of pardon, having prayed in the words taught us by the Lord himself, and asked assistance from on high, we ought to feel our hearts burn within us, with gratitude for His great mercy in thus permitting us to come before him, and join with the holy angels, in saying, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.”¹ “Praise ye the Lord.” “The Lord’s name be praised.”

¹ Isaiah vi. 3 ; also Revelations iv. 8.

DIALOGUE XI.

Mamma.—We ended our last Sunday's conversation with those beautiful sentences, "Praise ye the Lord," the English translation of the word "Hallelujah," which the priest calls upon the people to join in, and they answer, or ought to answer, with cheerful and willing voices, "The Lord's name be praised." Now read from the Rubric what follows.

Caroline.—"Then shall be said or sung this Psalm, except on Easter-day, upon which another anthem is appointed, and on the nineteenth day of every month it is not to be read here, but in the ordinary course of the Psalms." What is the meaning of the word anthem, mamma?

Mamma.—An anthem is a holy song, a hymn sung in alternate parts. That is, one or two or more persons singing one verse or part, and then others answering or joining with them. The Psalm that follows is the 95th. It used to be called formerly the Invitatory Psalm, as it calls or invites all people to “come and sing unto the Lord,” to come before his presence with thanksgivings, and shew ourselves glad in him with Psalms.” We are warned “not to harden our hearts,” as the Israelites did in the wilderness,” but “to-day” to hear his voice, lest we too should not enter into his “rest,” that rest which St. Paul tells us, “remaineth for the people of God;” and in the 3d and 4th chapters of his Epistle to the Hebrews, you will find these verses of the 95th Psalm most beautifully and clearly explained; and we are there told to “exhort each other *daily*, while it is called *to-day*, lest a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of us should

come short of it." The Rubric again tells us what ought to follow. Read it, my love.

Caroline. — "Then shall follow the Psalms in order as they are appointed. And at the end of every Psalm throughout the year, and likewise at the end of Benedicite, Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis shall be repeated, 'Glory be to the Father, &c.,' 'as it was in the beginning, &c.'" Those are very difficult words, mamma, What do they mean?

Mamma.—It would take me too long a time to give you the history of what is called the Reformation, and you will read it yourself when you are a little older, but *before that* time the religion of England was the Roman Catholic, and the prayers of that Church are read in Latin. In the year 1540, the King (Henry VIII.) appointed a committee of clergymen to reform the rituals and offices (or ceremonies) of the Church; and in 1554, the king ordered the prayers

to be put into English. In the first year of the reign of that good young king Edward the Sixth, who has been called by some the English Josiah, a complete Liturgy was arranged, called as it is now the book of Common Prayer. This book was revised by Bishop Cranmer and others in 1551, and on the 1st of November, 1552, it was first used in St. Paul's Church, and also through the whole city. But in 1553, Queen Mary, who determined to restore the Roman Catholic religion, forbid these prayers to be read; but when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, King Edward's book of prayer, with some little variations, was established; and in the first year of James the First some additions and a few alterations were made. At the restoration of Charles the Second, a revision of the Liturgy took place, and the Epistles and Gospels were taken from the last translation of the Bible made in the time of King James. Since that time no alteration of any im-

portance has been made ; nor do I think that it needs any, for its doctrines and prayers are so completely grounded on the Holy Scriptures, that no human composition can be compared to it ; and we ought never to forget the gratitude we owe to the Almighty, for having placed us in a country, where these beautiful prayers are read in our *own* language, instead of being in Latin ; so that *all* the *people*, the poor and ignorant, to whom our Saviour “ commanded that the Gospel should be preached,”¹ may join in them as well as the wise and learned. Benedicite, Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis, are the first word of four Psalms, or Songs of Praise, which I will explain when we come to them in the service.

Caroline.—Mamma, why is Edward called the English Josiah ?

Mamma.—Because, like Josiah, “ while he was yet young, he began to seek after

¹ Acts x. 42.

the God of David,"² and he encouraged all his people to serve him. He too was removed from this world by an early death, and the people of England mourned for him, as we are told all the people of Israel did for Josiah.³ But we must now return to the service. After the 95th Psalm, those appointed for the day of the month are read; the whole book of the Psalms having been so arranged, that by reading three or four, morning and evening, they may all be read in thirty days, and when there are thirty-one days in the month, the last Psalms are read over twice. Oh, how thankful we ought all to be—but more especially, those among the poor who cannot read,—that our Church has appointed these holy songs to be so often read, that, if they attend as they ought to do, they may soon learn them by heart.—“What is there necessary for man to know,” says Hooker, “which the Psalms are not

² 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.

³ 2 Chron. xxxv. 24.

able to teach? Let there be any grief, or disease incident unto the soul of man, any wound or sickness named, for which there is not, in this treasure-house, a present, comfortable remedy at all times ready to be found.” “In the language of this Divine book, therefore,” adds Bishop Horne, “the prayers and praises of the Church have been offered up to the throne of grace, from age to age.”⁴ At the end of each Psalm, we declare our faith in the blessed Trinity by repeating, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.” The Rubric then directs, that the first lesson taken out of the Old Testament is to be distinctly read in an audible voice. St. Luke tells us, in the Acts of the Apostles, that it was the custom of the Jews, to read the law of Moses in the

⁴ See Horne’s Preface to the “Commentary on the Psalms.”

synagogues every Sabbath-day.⁵ Our Saviour also, we are told, “as his *custom was*, went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the Prophet Esaias.”⁶ Our Church, following this holy custom, thus gives to all, even the most ignorant, an opportunity of hearing and learning the Word of God ; for by going twice to church every Sunday, they may hear four chapters out of the Old and New Testament, besides the Psalms, and the Epistles, and Gospels ; therefore, not being able to read, is not an excuse for being *ignorant* of the Word of God, because all may have the blessed privilege of *hearing it read* in the house of God, as the little hymn says :—

To-day with pleasure Christians meet,
To pray and hear the Word ;
And I would go with cheerful feet,
To learn thy will, O Lord.

⁵ Acts xv. 21.

⁶ Luke iv. 16, 17.

But it is time for us, my dear child, to avail ourselves of this happiness; the merry bells are calling us “to enter his courts with praise.”

Caroline.—Yes, dear mamma, and this reminds me of part of another pretty hymn :—

Like Samuel, let me say,
Whene'er I hear thy word,
“Speak, Lord, I would obey
The voice that I have heard :”
And when I in thy house appear,
“Speak, for thy servant waits to hear.”

DIALOGUE XII.

Mamma.—Did you, my dear little Caroline, pay attention last Sunday to the beautiful hymn which is said after the *first lesson*, as the chapter is called that is read out of the Old Testament? It is named, as the other hymns are, after the Latin words at the beginning: “Te Deum laudamus,” which mean, Thee, O God, we praise; or, as it is translated, “We praise thee, O God.” Can any thing be more appropriate than this noble hymn? We have been hearing God’s Word read; perhaps some affecting instance of his great love and mercy, or some wonderful proof of his almighty power, has been the subject of the lesson; the heart has been excited to wonder,

love, and praise, and the lips should joyfully unite in exclaiming, "We praise thee, O Lord, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." The earth, the angels, the heavens, and all the heavenly powers unite in this worship. "To thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth."¹

Caroline.—I know, mamma, that the cherubim and seraphim are the angels of God, but I do not know what is the meaning of the word Sabaoth.

Mamma.—In the 6th chapter of Isaiah and 3d verse, we find this song of the angels. The word Sabaoth means hosts or armies ; Isaiah says, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims : each one had six wings ; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto

¹ Isaiah vi. 3.

another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Caroline.—Then Lord God of Sabaoth, means Lord God of Hosts?

Mamma. — Yes, my love. Having thus, with the heavenly angels, with the apostles, prophets, and martyrs, united in declaring that heaven and earth are full of the glory of the Lord, we proceed to a confession of faith. “The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee, both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” Do you understand, my love, what is the meaning, in this sense, of the word Church? because, I always wish you to ask me the explanation of every word you do not quite understand.

Caroline.—I do not know, dear mamma, what Church means in this sense, because I know it cannot mean the buildings we call churches.

Mamma.—You will find the word Church frequently used in the New Testa-

ment. It means, all of whatever country or people, from the beginning to the end of the world, who worship the true God according to his Word, and who form one body of which Christ is the head. Sometimes St. Paul uses the word Church when speaking of the Christians of a particular country,² and sometimes of a family.³ In the sense in which it is used in this hymn, “the Holy Church throughout all the world” means, those who acknowledge the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The next verses declare the belief of the Church in Christ as the King of Glory, as the everlasting Son of the Father; he that, as St. John tells us, “*was with God from the beginning, and was God;*”⁴ by whom all things were made; that he came down from heaven to deliver man, and became a little child and like us;⁵ and by overcoming death he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all

² 1 Cor. i. 2. ³ Col. iv. 15. ⁴ St. John i. 2, 3.

⁵ John i. 14.

believers, and is now sitting at the right hand of God,⁶ from whence also we believe he shall come again to judge the world⁷ at the last day. Having thus professed our faith in Christ, both as our Redeemer and Judge, we supplicate his assistance in the following verses : “ We therefore pray thee, help thy servants : whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy saints : in glory everlasting. O Lord, save thy people : and bless thine heritage. Govern them, and lift them up for ever. Day by day, we magnify thee ; and we worship thy name : ever world without end. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. O Lord, have mercy upon us : have mercy upon us. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee.” The whole of the hymn, so far, has been in the name of the *whole* Church, but in the last verse, each individual, as it were,

⁶ Heb. i. 3.

⁷ 2 Tim. iv. 1.

confirms the whole by declaring his own belief to be the same as that of the Church. O Lord, in thee have *I* trusted, let *me* never be confounded. This hymn is said to have been composed by St. Ambrose in the year 376, and first sung at the baptism of St. Augustine.

Caroline.—Oh mamma, will you tell me something of Ambrose and Augustine? I should like to hear about them very much.

Mamma.—With much pleasure, my love, will I tell you all that is known of their histories which I think will interest you, but it will take us too long to finish them this morning before church-time; we had better, therefore, reserve it for our next Sunday morning's conversation.

DIALOGUE XIII.

Caroline.—Oh mamma, I am so glad this Sunday is come, I wish so much to hear about Ambrose and Augustine.

Mamma.—Ambrose died about the year 397, lamented by the whole Christian world. At the age of thirty-four he was appointed Bishop of Milan. He gave all his estate to the poor and for the support of the Church. “The poor,” he said, “were his stewards and treasurers.” He was incessantly occupied; the time he could spare from pastoral and charitable engagements was devoted to meditation and study. He died at the age of fifty-seven; his life, perhaps, shortened by the incessant activity of his mind, and the multiplicity of his employments,—

Augustine was the son of Patricius, a heathen, who continued a Pagan.

Caroline.—What is a Pagan, mamma?

Mamma.—A heathen, or idolater, one who worships false gods. The father of Augustine was a Pagan till near his death, but his mother Monica was renowned for Christian piety. From his childhood she taught him to believe in Jesus; and when he was a boy, being very dangerously ill, he requested to be baptized; his mother earnestly desiring that he should be a child of God, was going to comply with his request, but he recovered, and his baptism was deferred, which he seems afterwards to have much regretted, saying, “How much better for me had I been in more *early life* initiated into the fold of Christ.” At school he was ambitious only to excel in human learning, and his father gave him every advantage, and was very anxious for his advancement in learning. When he was seventeen his father died, having been before

his death, through the gentle influence of his sweet and excellent wife, converted to Christianity ; but she had the grief of finding her son was forgetting her holy instructions, following vain and heathen philosophers, and leading a life of sin. Yet for nine years did his poor anxious mother persist in incessant prayer for him. A very interesting story is told of her being so distressed about him, that she went to a bishop and intreated *him* to endeavour to reason with her son. He told her that he should be happy to do so if he had any chance of success, but that Augustine was then too full of conceit and vanity to attend to any reasoning ; “ Let him alone,” he added, “ only continue praying to the Lord for him, in the course of his study he will discover his error.” This did not satisfy the anxious parent, and with floods of tears she persisted in her request ; till at last, a little out of temper at her importunity, he said, “ Begone, good woman, it is not possible that

the child of such tears should perish.” His poor mother was comforted by these words, and day and night her prayers rose up before God for him. About this time he was persuaded to go to Rome as a teacher, instead of remaining at Carthage. His mother, little thinking that this would in the end be a blessing to him, lamented it, and when he was going to sail, followed him weeping to the sea-shore. He deceived her, and told her he was only going to remain with a friend until his friend should embark, and that he would return to her ; yet he sailed away that night, and left her still to weep and pray for him. While he was at Rome he had a dangerous illness, and God was merciful enough to preserve him through it, yet still he remained an unbeliever, but he afterwards went as a professor of rhetoric——

Caroline.—What is rhetoric, mamma ?

Mamma.—The art of speaking with elegance, and in a manner that will

persuade and convince the hearers. It was to Milan he went, of which place the good Ambrose was bishop, and Augustine called upon him. The holy man received him like a father, and Augustine was so much pleased with him that he attended his lectures, not from a wish to become a Christian, he says in his own account of his life, but from a curious desire of knowing whether he deserved the fame he had acquired for eloquence. But by degrees he began to think that what Ambrose said must be truth; and his mother, who had followed him by land and by sea, began to hope she should soon receive an answer to all her prayers. But he was too proud and vain to humble himself before God in prayer, therefore he remained very unhappy for some time. At last he began to read his Bible, and read it with "trembling," feeling how great a sinner he was. He went to church as often as he had leisure from those other employ-

ments, “under the weight of which,” he says, “he groaned.” One day a friend came to visit him, and took up a book that was lying on the table, supposing it to be a book on rhetoric, and found it was St. Paul’s epistles. Though a soldier at court, he was a devout person, and he was delighted to converse with him on a subject so much more interesting than any other. Alypius, his friend, told him of two of his companions who had given themselves up to God. He became so affected at hearing that others who had not studied anxiously ten or twelve years, as he had done—had still been enabled to give themselves up to God’s service, while he felt full of vanity and unwilling to do so—that he rose and left the house and went into the garden. Alypius followed, but his bitter meditations filled him with such misery that he burst into a violent flood of tears, and hastily rose up from Alypius, and threw himself under a fig-tree, and weep-

ing exclaimed, “How long, Lord, wilt thou be angry—for ever? Remember not my old iniquities. How long shall I say, To-morrow? Why should not this hour put an end to my slavery?” While he thus spoke, and wept in the bitterness of his soul, he heard a voice as from a neighbouring house repeat frequently, “Take up and read, take up and read.” Concluding that this was a command from heaven, he returned hastily to the place where Alypius was sitting, for he had placed St. Paul’s epistles there. He seized the book and read, and immediately every doubt vanished. His friend then joined him in going to his mother, whose mourning was now turned into joy. This excellent mother had the happiness of living to see her son admitted a member of the Church by baptism, and walking in the ways of holiness. She died just as they were going to return to Carthage, their native country, Augustine being at the time

thirty-three years of age. He then retired to his own estate, and lived for three years in retirement. He was afterwards ordained a priest, and assisted Valerius, the Bishop of Hippo (a place in Africa), of which place he was himself afterwards bishop, and for nearly forty years was a devoted servant of God. His last days were passed in much affliction. Genseric, King of the Vandals, invaded Africa and made a dreadful desolation. Poor Augustine had to mourn over the devastation of the country, the destruction of the churches, and the cruelties inflicted on its pastors. While he was thus lamenting the miseries around him, in company with several bishops who had fled to Hippo for shelter, he told them, he had prayed that God would free them from the siege, or endue his servants with patience, or take him out of the world to himself. In the third month of the siege he was seized with a fever, which

terminated his life at the age of seventy-six, full of repentance and grief for the sins of his youth; for he used to say, “A Christian should never cease to repent, even to the hour of his death.”

Caroline. — Oh thank you, dear mamma, for telling me his history, I like it very much indeed.

DIALOGUE XIV.

Caroline.—Well, dear mamma, we must now go back to the Prayer-book, we left off last at the hymn beginning “We praise thee, O God.”

Mamma. — That hymn, *Te Deum laudamus*, is the one usually read in our churches after the first lesson, but the clergyman may read the *Benedicite*, so called, as the others are, from the first words in the Latin. That is also a very beautiful song of praise, “It was an ancient hymn in the Jewish Church, and adopted from very early times into the Christian worship.”¹ It is said to be the “Song of the three Holy Children,” in

¹ Book of Common Prayer, with explanatory notes.

that part of the Bible called the Apocrypha, as it was supposed to have been sung by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, when they were cast into the burning fiery furnace by king Nebuchadnezzar. It is a paraphrase on the 148th Psalm, and calls upon all the works of the Almighty, the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the wonders of creation, both animate and inanimate, to bless the Lord, to praise him and magnify him for ever.

Caroline.—Oh! mamma, you have said two or three very hard words, that I do not at all understand. What is the Apocrypha?

Mamma.—Apocrypha is a word which signifies doubtful, not certain. Those books which are called Apocryphal were written by good men, and may be read with much pleasure and profit also, as giving the sentiments and opinions of those who feared God, and who lived in days long gone by; but they were not

like the “holy men of God”² who wrote the Scriptures, “moved to do so by the Holy Ghost.” *Their* instructions are only those of good men—men of “like passions with ourselves,”—and therefore liable to error; not like those of the other parts of the Bible, the Word of God himself, inspired and dictated by him to those who wrote them “for our instruction in righteousness, that we may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.”³ You understand now, my dear love, do you not, why those books from which this hymn is taken, and which are bound up with some Bibles, are called Apocryphal?

Caroline.—Yes, dear mamma, I *think* I do, they are like my little hymns or sermons, good to read, to instruct us, and to show us what other good people think of God and all his works, but not like the Bible, his *own* words.

² 2 Peter i. 21.

³ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Mamma.—Now what is the next “hard word” I am to explain.

Caroline.—Paraphrase, mamma, What is that?

Mamma.—A paraphrase of a hymn, or any other composition, means something very like the original, but not exactly in the same words. It is a kind of imitation, generally longer, explaining in more words the same meaning.

Caroline.—I was going, mamma, to ask you what you meant by saying animate and inanimate, but I think I have made out myself what it means; animate means the things which are *alive*, the men, and the cattle, and the birds, and those that can praise him with their voices; the inanimate, the trees, and the rivers, and the snows, and the dews, that in that Psalm are also called upon to praise him.

Mamma.—You are right, my love, all these things exalt and magnify his name.

The sun, the moon, the stars, or, as David says, the whole “Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work.”⁴ They “spread the truth from pole to pole,” and call upon man to join in the universal chorus of praise and thanksgiving to Him who has created them all.

⁴ Psalm xix. 1.

DIALOGUE XV.

Mamma.—I have already observed to you, my dear little girl, that no one who is able to attend the service of our Church, even, if they cannot read, can plead as an excuse, that, *as* they cannot read they are ignorant of the Scriptures, because every Sunday they have four chapters of the Bible read to them there. After the Psalms, a chapter from the Old Testament is read, and after the hymn “We praise thee, O God,” as you will see by the Rubric, a chapter taken from the New Testament.

Caroline.—Mamma, I remarked that last Sunday Mr. — read a different hymn after the lesson from the one he

usually reads. Do you know why he did so?

Mamma.—I think I do, my love, and I thought it was very right of him to do so. There are *two* hymns appointed to be read after the second lesson, and the clergyman *may* read either; but as the lesson of last Sunday was the third chapter of St. Luke, in which John the Baptist is described as fulfilling his mission, “preaching the baptism of repentance,” and declaring “that one mightier than him is to come,” it seemed particularly appropriate to join in the beautiful anthem of praise uttered by Zacharias, the father of John, when his speech was restored to him after the birth of the child, as it leads the mind to consider how truly the prophecies concerning him were fulfilled. Zacharias, who, for a want of faith in the promise of the Almighty, had been struck dumb for many months, now seeing all his sinful doubts removed by the birth of his

son, and being restored to the faculty of speech, makes, as he ought, the best use of it by “praising God.”¹ And God was pleased to pour upon him his Spirit; and we are told, “he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.”² He rejoices now that all the words spoken by “His holy prophets since the world began,” are soon to be fulfilled by the birth of the Messiah, and that the “oath made to Abraham” will be performed; and then, turning to his new-born son, he exclaims, “And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways.” So you see it was particularly appropriate to read this hymn, to recall to our minds, that *all* we had just heard of John had been foretold and prophesied so long before.

¹ Luke i. 64.² Luke i. 67, 68.

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, it was ; and the other Psalm too is a very good one to choose after the New Testament has been read, for have not you told me that the New Testament is called the Gospel, and that the meaning of the word Gospel is “good news,” or “glad tidings?” So that after having heard these “glad tidings” it is right to say, “O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.”

Mamma.—It is, my love, a most beautiful and appropriate song of praise, and after it has been said or sung, the minister and the people continue standing, and repeat what is called the Apostles’ Creed, or, as it is sometimes called, the Belief.

Caroline.—Why is it called the Apostles’ Creed, mamma? Was it written by the Apostles?

Mamma.—Most probably it was *not*, my love, but it was used very early in

the Church, and is called the “Apostles’ Creed,” as containing Apostolic doctrines. It is divided into twelve articles, which we will read separately. The first is—“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.” It is not necessary that I should say much on this article, my little Caroline does not need any thing to prove to her, there must be a God.

Caroline.—Oh no, mamma, I know that nothing can make *itself*. This house was built by people, everything in the room was made by some one, then I should be foolish indeed, if I could think the mountains, the trees, the rivers, the sun, the moon, the stars, or any of the many, many things we see all round us, could make themselves; so that if the Bible did not tell me so, I must know that some one greater and more powerful than man must have created them.

Mamma.—You are right, my dear love, yet still we ought never to forget

to be thankful that we have the Bible to tell us of the one true and only God, or we might have been like those poor ignorant heathen, who worship the sun, and the stars, and make images of hideous creatures, and call *them* their gods. God is in this our Belief called the Father Almighty. He is called the Father, as being the Creator of all things, and also as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through him also "*our* Father," as he himself taught us to call him. He is Almighty, because his power ruleth over all things, and we know from the Holy Scriptures, that this Almighty Father is the Maker of heaven and earth. Having, therefore, declared our belief in Him, we proceed to the second article in the Creed—"And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord." In that beautiful chapter of St. John, the fourteenth, our Saviour says, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me;" but there are many things to be explained that are contained in these few words of our

Belief, and perhaps we shall not be able to look for all the texts to-day, we had better, therefore, defer this subject until next Sunday, and as there is a little time before church we will read the nineteenth Psalm, in which David so beautifully describes the "Heavens" as "telling the glory of God," and the "firmament shewing his handy work;" and proclaiming to every land by the regularity with which, day by day, and night by night, the heavenly bodies move over all the world, that there must not only be a Creator, but an Almighty Ruler over all things. Addison, a good man, whose history you will read with pleasure, I hope, some day or other, has written some beautiful verses in imitation of the first part of this Psalm. I will repeat them to you:—

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.

The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's pow'r display ;
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty Hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale ;
And nightly to the listening earth,
Repeats the story of her birth ;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball ;
What though nor real voice nor sound,
Amid their radiant orbs be found—
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice ;
For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is Divine.

DIALOGUE XVI.

Mamma.—We will now, my dear child, see if we understand properly, all that our Church means we should declare our belief in, in the second article of the Creed. What are the words ?

Caroline.—“ And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord.”

Mamma.—First then, we must know why he is called Jesus ; the meaning of the word is Saviour. When the angel proclaimed his birth he said, “ and ye shall call his name Jesus : for he shall save his people from their sins.”¹ “ God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus,”² says St. Paul, when preaching at Antioch. By the

¹ Matt. i. 21.

² Acts xiii. 23.

word Christ, his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, are expressed ; for the word means, as does also the Hebrew word Messiah, “Anointed.” It was a custom amongst the Eastern nations, when they wished to set apart anything for an honourable use, to anoint it, that is, pour oil upon it, and in the laws given by the Almighty to Moses, he commands him thus to anoint the tabernacle and temple, and their furniture, and not such things only, but Aaron and his sons. “Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him. And thou shalt bring his sons,” &c. “And thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.”³ Kings were also anointed, and are frequently called in the Scriptures the “Lord’s anointed,” and prophets also, as Elijah is directed to anoint Elisha prophet in his room.

Caroline.—Did they use any particular kind of oil, mamma ?

³ Exodus xxix. 7—9.

Mamma.—Yes, my love, the oil used was olive oil, and it was highly perfumed with different aromatic gums, and it was commanded to be kept holy, when thus mixed, and not used for other purposes ; but as it became the custom thus to anoint persons when they were raised to dignity and set apart for a particular service, the word was used frequently to express figuratively those who were distinguished by the favour and regard of the Almighty, even when no oil had been *literally* used, and in this sense it is applied to our Saviour. In the 45th Psalm, which is prophetical, and applies to the person of the Messiah, it is said, “ God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows ;”⁴ that is, “ exalted thee to rank and dignity beyond all creatures.” And in his person were united in the highest degree the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. He is the greatest prophet

⁴ Psalm xlv. 7.

that ever lived, having given to mankind the knowledge of the will of God, and confirmed his doctrine by miracles and predictions. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, tells us, that “Jesus Christ the Son of God, who is passed into the heavens, is our great High Priest ;” but the texts are so numerous, indeed the subject occupies so many chapters,⁵ that we cannot have time to read them now, and you are perhaps too young to understand them if we could, but mark them, and remember to read them as you grow older, for they explain the subject most fully ; and as it is in *one sense*, important that even now, though a little child, you should understand that he is also *your* High Priest, I will endeavour to explain it to you. I have already tried to make you comprehend the meaning of a *mediator*, and that from the moment man became a sinner

⁵ Epistle to the Hebrews.

he was *afraid* to come himself before God, and that in his great mercy, God from the very *beginning* appointed a way in which we might, as *Abel* affords us an example, through faith make an offering which would be accepted by him. When the law was given from Mount Sinai, we find the people were so much afraid of the glory and greatness of God, and of the fire which burned on the mountain, that they came to Moses and entreated that he would be their mediator.⁶ Now all the laws that were given to the people by the mouth of Moses, and the appointment of the High Priest to offer sacrifices for the people, and the sin-offerings, and the burnt-offerings, and all the ceremonies that were ordered, were but, as St. Paul tells us in the Hebrews, “types and shadows of better things to come.” By the law of Moses, it was commanded

⁶ Deut. v.

that the High Priest should enter into the most sacred part of the temple, called the “Holy of Holies,” and offer an atonement for the sins of the people, and it was not lawful for the people themselves to go in, only the priest;⁷ but *now*, as is fully explained by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, there is no longer any need of this yearly sacrifice for sin being offered up by any earthly priest,⁸ because Jesus himself has offered up *himself* once for all, and has entered the holiest place, even the heaven of heavens; and ever standeth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us.⁹ We may, therefore, ourselves “come boldly to the throne of grace,” and we shall find “grace to help us in time of need,”¹ because the “Holy Spirit will himself help our infirmities.”²

⁷ Heb. ix. 7.

⁸ Heb. ix. 12; also Heb. x. 11.

⁹ Heb. ix. 24; also Heb. viii. 1.

¹ Heb. iv. 16.

² Rom. viii. 26.

And now, my dear child, I wish you to understand why it is necessary that even you, though a little child, should know that this High Priest is *your* High Priest. We are told these ceremonies were only “ shadows of good things to come.” It is our duty, then, to know what these promised “ good things ” are. The morning and evening sacrifice is no longer offered up by priests for us, we must each, by praise and thanksgiving, offer up our *spiritual* morning and evening *sacrifice* for ourselves, and we must also seek for grace in *every* time of need, and we may come without *fear* ; we need not, as the trembling Israelites before the mount, to call upon Moses, or any one else to intercede for us. We need not say, How shall a poor miserable guilty worm, whose *very prayers* are mingled oftentimes with foolish thoughts, dare to appear before the Almighty with any petitions ? How can I imagine he will hear me with favour, when he can see

even the most secret recesses of the heart? How can the *words*, however holy they may be, that *I* use, be acceptable while so mingled with base and earthly thoughts? Such reflections as these should humble us, and make us, indeed, see and feel our *own utter helplessness*, but should, so far from deterring us from “coming *boldly*,” only increase our love and gratitude to Him for having provided for us a “great High Priest,” one so dearly beloved, that he will for His sake accept us, weak and sinful as we are. What comfort then to remember that our prayers being offered *by Him*, and *through Him*, are no longer *our* poor sinful imperfect petitions, but *His* prayers, purified from all evil—for how can evil dwell with him?—and presented by Him, who took upon Him our nature on purpose that he might be “touched with the feeling of our infirmities;” spotless and pure, and *therefore* acceptable to God.

Caroline. — But, mamma, all our prayers are *not always* granted, are they ?

Mamma.—*All* that are *good* for us are, my love ; and here, again, we have the comfort of knowing that we have an all-wise Mediator pleading for us. If we may, without being profane, dare to imagine what the words of our Saviour would be, we might suppose him thus interceding : This poor ignorant mortal, *blind* as to the *future*, has dared to ask what will be hurtful to him. Grant not his weak petition, but give him instead to know and acknowledge that what *thou* willest for him is best. Do you now understand, my love, what I have tried to explain about Christ being our “ High Priest ? ”^a

Caroline.—I think I do pretty well, mamma.

Mamma.—We may then proceed to those texts which show, that as the “ Anointed,” or “ Messiah,” he was not

^a Heb. iv. 15.

only Prophet and Priest, but a King. We need not look for all, they are so numerous. He is called by Daniel, Messiah the Prince. He is frequently alluded to in the Psalms as a king, and it was as a king, ruling in this world and subduing their enemies, that the Jews expected him. And Herod's fear that he would take the kingdom from him, made him direct the wise men, when they came from the East, demanding to be shown to him who was "born King of the Jews," to return to him, and tell *him* when they had found him, madly supposing that he could put to death one who, it had been so long foretold, was appointed by God to appear upon the earth. After his resurrection, he is frequently spoken of, as "reigning till all his enemies shall be subdued,"⁴ as being "crowned with glory and honour,"⁵ and being placed "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 25.⁵ Heb. ii. 9.

that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;”⁶ and in the Revelations he is called “King of kings, and Lord of lords,”⁷ and it is said, “he shall reign for ever and ever.”⁸ Let us therefore remember to obey his laws and keep his commandments, that when he comes again to reign in glory, we may be among those to whom he will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.”⁹ Having now seen that he is in every sense the “anointed” of the Lord, and that we express that belief when we call him Christ, it remains for us to see the last part of this second article of the creed, in which we acknowledge him to be the “only Son” of God, and “our Lord.” I need hardly remind you of the many texts in which he is called the Son of God. You can yourself, I dare say, remember some.

⁶ Eph. i. 21.⁷ Rev. xix. 16.⁸ Rev. xi. 15.⁹ Matt. xxv. 84.

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, when he was baptized in Jordan, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;”¹ and when he was transfigured on the mount also, a voice out of the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”²

Mamma.—These texts are quite enough for us, my dear little girl, we need not more to confirm our faith; but there is one thing more important than any thing which we must believe concerning him, as the Son of God, which is, that it was not only while on earth in human form that God calls him his Son, but that he was with God from the beginning. He says of himself that he had “glory with the Father *before the world was.*”³ He in the beginning “was with God, and *was God.*”⁴ “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything

¹ Matt. iii. 17. ² Matt. xvii. 5. ³ John xvii. 5.

⁴ John i. 1.

made that was made.”⁶ Besides, he frequently appeared to his people of old, to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, to the seventy elders on the mount—he went before the Israelites in the wilderness—when he came on earth to redeem us, he came *down* from heaven and *took* upon him our human nature. These things we must *believe*, because they are plainly told us in the Bible, without bewildering ourselves as to whether we can understand them. There are many things which, while we remain in our *human* bodies, we are not capable of comprehending, but we are promised that a time shall come when we *shall* understand. St. Paul says, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known.”⁶ He himself had assured us, that “He and his Father are one;”⁷ and that whosoever hath seen him hath “seen the

⁶ John i. 3. ⁶ 1 Cor. xiii. 12. ⁷ John x. 30.

Father also.”^s Let us then not hesitate to acknowledge Him, our Lord and our God, and to ascribe to Him, glory and dominion, for ever and ever.

^s John xiv. 9.

DIALOGUE XVII.

Mamma.—We are now come to a part of the creed which we cannot understand ; we must believe it, because it is plainly told us in the Scriptures, but St. Paul calls it a mystery, “ without controversy great is the mystery of godliness : God was manifest in the flesh.”¹ The eternal Son of God left the glory he had with the Father, and condescended to take upon him our human nature ; to be a little helpless baby ; to suffer pain, and hunger, and thirst ; to be made in every thing like to ourselves except in sin. His mother was the Virgin Mary, and we may feel sure that she was eminent for her piety and virtue, for the angel Ga-

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

briel himself addressed her, as “highly favoured,” and said, “The Lord is with thee : Blessed art thou among women.” But though she was thus favoured in being “the mother of our Lord,” we must not forget that He himself has told us, that it was not on *this account* that she was blessed ; “Yea, rather,” said he to the woman in the crowd, “blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it ;”² and on another occasion, when some one told him that his mother and brethren wished to speak with him, he answered, “Who is my mother or my brethren ? And he looked round on them which sat about him and said, Behold my mother and my brethren ! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.”³ And in no part of the Bible are we told to pay her any especial honour. She was, indeed, a holy, and ⁷“favoured” woman, but only a woman ; not to be addressed as the

² Luke xi. 27, 28.³ Mark iii. 32—35.

Roman Catholics teach, as the “queen of heaven,” or have prayers said to her, as if she were equal with God. Upon this article of the creed, therefore, it is not necessary to say more. By the Saviour of the world thus condescending to be born of a woman, the promise made in the third chapter of Genesis, to Adam and Eve after their fall, is fulfilled ; the “seed of the woman, has bruised the serpent’s head.”⁴ “He came into the world to save sinners,”⁵ and “to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”⁶ Let us now go to the fourth article. Read it, my dear Caroline.

Caroline.—“Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended into hell ; the”—

Mamma.—Stop there, my love ; his resurrection is the subject of another article ; we have now to consider the sad, sad history of all the sufferings, which for our sakes he endured, the contempla-

⁴ Gen. iii. 15. ⁵ 1 Tim. i. 15. ⁶ Heb. ii. 14.

tion of which ought to fill us with shame, and humiliation, and sorrow. It was for *our* sakes, to redeem *us* from the curse which our sin must otherwise bring upon us, that the eternal Son of God “took upon him the form of a servant, . . . and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”⁷ For us, that he became “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: for our transgressions he was wounded, for our iniquities he was bruised, and brought as a lamb to the slaughter.”⁸ How can we bear to think, without feeling the greatest sorrow, that it was our sins which rendered it necessary for him to endure such dreadful sufferings? How can we “look on him we have pierced, and not *mourn* because of him?”⁹ How endure the thoughts, without shedding tears of penitence and grief; of his bitter agony in the garden of Gethsemane, when “his soul was sorrowful even unto death, and he prayed

⁷ Phil. ii. 7, 8. ⁸ Isa. liii. 3, 5. 7. ⁹ Zech. xii. 10.

that if it were possible, the cup might pass from him.”¹ Ought it not, indeed, to fill us with a deep hatred and abhorrence of sin, the *cause* of all these fearful sufferings, and lead us to earnest prayer, that we may be enabled by grace to show our love for him, who has so loved us?

Caroline.—Oh mamma, how can we ever love him enough, or show half the thankfulness we ought? Oh! how can we show we love him?

Mamma.—We never can, my dearest child, while in *this* world, serve him or love him as we ought; but he has mercifully left us in the Bible many plain directions and commands, and has graciously promised that he will himself give us strength to keep them. “If ye love me,” he says himself, “keep my commandments.”² And his beloved disciple John has told us the same, adding, “and his commandments are not grievous;”³ and through the *whole* of his most beautiful epistle,

¹ Matt. xxvi. 38, 39. ² John xiv. 15. ³ 1 John v. 3.

has left us many marks, by which we may know whether we really do love him, and have his Spirit abiding in us. The texts are too numerous to mention now ; besides, I hope when you are a little older, you will not only read, but learn by heart, the whole epistle. But we must return now to the fourth article of the Belief, or we shall not have time to finish all there is to explain in it, before church-time. We are told that he suffered under Pontius Pilate ; that is to say, Pontius Pilate was then governor of Judea, under the Roman emperor Tiberius. It was useful to record the date, because it proves the prophecies to have been fulfilled by the appearance of the Saviour *at that particular time*. One mark that was to prove the time of His coming was, that the “ Sceptre was to be departed from Judah ; ”⁴ and Judea being governed by a *Roman governor* proved that it *was then* departed ; and

⁴ Gen. xlix. 10.

the prophet Daniel had expressly foretold that from the restoration of Jerusalem, after the Babylonish captivity, the account of which we read in Ezra, till “Messiah” should “be cut off,”⁵ there should pass a certain number of years, and *this* time was *then* fulfilled. Even the death he died was a confirmation of the prophecies, and yet it was one the most unlikely, as the Jews, while they executed their own laws, never crucified persons alive. But it had been foretold, “they pierced my hands and my feet.”⁶ In short, every one of the prophecies were so *literally* fulfilled, that it seems wonderful indeed, that the Jews should have been so blind as not to understand them ; for the 53d chapter of Isaiah describes every part of his sufferings so plainly, (that one wicked infidel who did not *wish* to believe, tried to prove it must have been written by some one afterwards and then put in the book of Isaiah,) even fore-

⁵ Dan. ix. 26.

⁶ Ps. xxii. 16.

telling, that though he was numbered with the malefactors—which was fulfilled by the two thieves being crucified with Him—yet, that he should “make his grave with the rich.” I think you remember how this was accomplished.

Caroline.—Oh, yes, mamma, Joseph of Arimathea, “a rich man,” went to Pilate and begged to be allowed to take down the body of Jesus, that he might bury it, and Pilate gave him leave to do so; and he “brought fine linen, and took him down and wrapped him in the linen,”⁸ and put him in his own new tomb, wherein no man had ever been laid before.

Mamma.—Quite right, my dear little girl; and St. John adds, what the other three Evangelists do not mention, that Nicodemus, who was also a great man, and a ruler, “came *also* and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. And they wound

⁷ Matt. xxvii. 57.

⁸ Mark xv. 46.

the body in the linen with the spices, 'as the manner of the Jews is to bury.'"⁹ So this prophecy also, that though he was put to death with the wicked, he made his grave with the rich, was also literally fulfilled. We are now come to a part of the creed, which ; as it has unfortunately been translated wrong into English, and is, I fear, frequently misunderstood ; I must be more particular in explaining. After his burial, we are told, he descended into hell ; and we cannot have any doubt that he did so, because, in the 2d chapter of the Acts, we find St. Peter explaining, that the 16th Psalm of David was a prophecy concerning Christ. He says, " He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not *left* in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." ¹ Being, therefore, told by the Holy Scriptures that he was once there, though his soul should not be left there, we must endeavour to understand the

⁹ John xix. 39.

¹ Acts ii. 31.

meaning of the word ; and upon this there has been, among the learned, some difference of opinion ; some having imagined that he went to triumph over the devil, and to preach to the spirits which were in prison, and they found this opinion on some verses in the Epistle of Peter. But I cannot understand them so ; to me they appear to mean, merely, that the Spirit of Christ was with Noah, whom he calls, in his second Epistle, “ a preacher of righteousness ; ”² and that, as they did not listen to him, they are reserved for judgment at the last day. I will read you the verses, from 1 Peter iii. 18—20 : “ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the *flesh*, but quickened (that means being made alive) by the Spirit : by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison ; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuf-

² 2 Peter ii. 5.

fering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." It is not, however, of any great consequence to *us*, how we understand these verses; nor, that we should try and guess how the soul of our Saviour was employed during the interval between his burial and his resurrection. Our Saviour himself tells us, in his parable of the rich man and Lazarus, that the moment our body dies, our souls are conveyed either to joy or misery. He told the penitent thief on the cross, that he should "*that* day be with *Him* in Paradise;" so, we are certain, that he went to the abodes of those "blessed spirits," who "rest from their labours,"³ with the "spirits of other just men made perfect;"⁴ and more than that, they are with Jesus himself: for, St. Paul says, that he is desirous to "depart" from this world, "that he may *be with* Christ;"⁵ and, in another part, that he is "willing rather

³ Rev. xiv. 13. ⁴ Heb. xii. 23. ⁵ Phil. i. 23.

to be absent from the body," that he may be "*present* with the Lord."⁶ These assurances then ought to be enough for us, nor need we bewilder ourselves much on the subject of our Saviour's descent into hell; though I think, if the original word does not mean the place of torment, it is pity that it has been translated into a term, which, in our language, is understood as applying only to that abode of misery, "where," our Saviour himself tells us, "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

⁶ 2 Cor. v. 8.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

Mamma.—We have this morning, my dear little girl, a joyful subject for our thoughts,—our Lord's resurrection. The fifth article of the Belief tells us, that “on the third day he rose again from the dead.” Nothing can be more beautiful and affecting than the description of this event by the Evangelists: let us read it as told by St. Matthew (28th chapter). “In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to *dawn*, toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and

sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow : And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, *Fear not ye* : for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified." Let us stop here, my dear child, and think of this : "*Fear not ye*, for I know that ye seek Jesus." They that seek Jesus should never *fear*. " Though the earth should be removed, and the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea ;" for, as in this very instance, what might, to mere weak and sinful mortals seem a just cause for fear and trembling, making even the keepers, who were soldiers, afraid, was to those who were " seeking Jesus," a subject for joy and thanksgiving ; for, as we read in the following verses, the angels commissioned the women to " go *quickly* and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead ; and behold, he goeth before you

into Galilee, there shall ye see him : I have told you." And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear ; *not* the fear which agitated the keepers, but " holy fear, accompanied with great joy." Many are the beautiful and affecting incidents related in the Holy Scriptures of the goodness and condescension of our Lord after his resurrection. His tender mercy, in naming Peter, the poor broken-hearted repentant Peter, who having denied his Lord might justly have expected, that he should be now cast off, as our Lord himself had said, " Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels :"¹ but Peter had repented bitterly with many tears, and the Lord, whose delight is in mercy, and who only waiteth to be gracious, hastens to send him a message of peace.

¹ Luke ix. 26.

“Go your way,” says the angel to the women, “tell his disciples and *Peter*, that he goeth before you into Galilee ; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.” Can you not remember yourself, my love, some of the events that occurred after his resurrection ?

Caroline.—Oh yes, mamma, he appeared to two disciples who were on the road to Emmaus. They were talking together of all the things that had happened, and while they were doing so, the Bible says, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them, and asked them why they were sad ; and then he explained to them the prophecies, and went and eat with them ; and their eyes had been holden that they should not know him, but while he “sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him ; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our

heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"² Oh mamma, I should like to have been one of those disciples.

Mamma.—It is most natural, my dear child, when we read of those who were thus blessed with the presence of our Lord, and who heard *him* explain to them the Scriptures, and speak in words that made their "hearts burn within them," to wish to have been one of those highly favoured ones; yet, we must not forget, that when "he ascended up on high,"³ He "received" for *us* yet *more* precious gifts, than to see him with our eyes, in *this* world, even the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that He, himself, tells his disciples, that it was "*expedient*" for him to go away, that he might send to us the Holy Ghost—the Comforter,⁴ who will come unto *us*, while "we walk by

² Luke xxiv. 13—32.

³ Psalms.

⁴ John xiv. xv. xvi.

the way and are sad ;” and “ open *our* hearts to understand the Scriptures,” if we ask for his assistance. And there is one circumstance related, which occurred after his resurrection, so full of comfort to those who may feel as you do, my dear little girl, that they should like to have lived in those days ; to have *seen* the Saviour, that we will now read it, as related by St. John : “ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And, after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them : then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my

hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side : and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, *because* thou hast *seen* me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have *not seen*, and *yet* have believed.”⁵ Now, in this most affecting incident, there are two or three things, especially to be noticed : First, we have the proof of His constant Presence, or, as it is called, Omnipresence ; for though Thomas saw Him not, when he declared his doubts, Jesus *was* present and heard all he said, and after *eight days*, he called those words, perhaps forgotten by Thomas, to his remembrance. Never forget this, my dear child, nor that our Saviour himself has told us, that for even our “idle” words, we shall be called to give an account : every deed, every word, even every thought is known to Him, and

⁵ John xx. 24—29.

though “eight days,” or even a longer time may pass, they will sooner or later be brought to judgment. The next thing worthy of remark is, the great mercy and condescension of Jesus: instead of reproaching, for his faithless unbelief, the now humbled Thomas, he affectionately offers him those very proofs; that it was He who was dead, but was now alive again; which had required, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.” At such a mark of forgiving love, well might Thomas exclaim, “My Lord and my God.” But observe what follows, for after the wish you have expressed, it is to this I more particularly intended to draw your attention, What does our Lord say? “Thomas, because thou hast *seen* me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have *not seen*, and *yet* have believed.” After this, you will no longer regret that you should be

among those, whom the Saviour himself pronounces "blessed." There are many other interesting particulars related respecting the resurrection, but I shall have again to return to this subject, and it is time now to get ready for church. This evening you can learn this hymn :—

'Tis early dawn, and Mary stands
With other holy women weeping ;
Alas ! in vain we come, they say,
For who shall roll the stone away ?
A " watch " the seal is keeping.

Yet lo ! the stone *was* rolled away,
And angels sat thereon ;
Thus, those who seek the Lord with fear
Shall find their path already clear,
If they press boldly on.

" What seek ye here among the dead ? "
Exclaimed the heavenly vision ;
" Seek ye the Lord ? Be not afraid,
Behold the spot, where he was laid ;
He is not here, but risen."

Thus should Faith speak to those who mourn
Around the grave where lieth,
" Asleep in Jesus," him they loved,
Though he be from their sight removed,
They hear a voice which crieth,

“ What seek ye here ? death has no power
His soul to keep in prison ;
Weep not for Him, have I not said,
I'm God of th' living, not the dead ?
He is not here, but risen.”

DIALOGUE XIX.

Mamma.—What article of the creed are we this morning, my love, to make the subject of our conversation?

Caroline.—The ascension; I know that means, the going up of our Saviour into heaven. “He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.”

Mamma.—We shall find it best, my dear child, to read the account given to us in the Bible of this most interesting event. After his resurrection, we are told by St. Luke, in the 1st chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, he shewed himself to those “apostles whom he had chosen,” “by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and

speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”¹

Caroline.—I know, *who* they were, mamma, because we are told their names in the 10th chapter of St. Matthew, but what is the meaning of the word apostle?

Mamma.—The meaning of the word is, a messenger sent upon any special errand. In the 3d chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews,² our Saviour is himself called an apostle, as having been sent from heaven by God the Father, and those who were appointed by Him to preach the Gospel to the world are called *His* apostles, as being sent on that joyful message by *Him*. As an apostle sent from heaven by God the Father, our Saviour had finished his appointed task on earth, as he says himself, in his most beautiful prayer, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the

¹ Acts i. 3.

² Heb. iii. 1.

world was.”³ He had, as St. Paul explains in his Epistle to the Hebrews, offered himself without spot to God ; not as the high priest of the Jews did, entering into the holy place with “the blood of goats and of calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”⁴ Having, therefore, thus completed the work of the *atonement*, he is now entered as our great High Priest, “into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us ;”⁵ and having “offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.”⁶ Do you understand, my love, what that expression means—Sitting at the right hand of God ?

Caroline.—No, not quite, mamma.

Mamma.—As our imperfect and weak understandings cannot comprehend heavenly things, God, in his Word, mercifully

³ John xvii. 4, 5.

⁴ Heb. ix. 12.

⁵ Heb. ix. 24.

⁶ Heb. x. 12.

makes use of such expressions, that by comparing them with the things we *do* see and understand, we may in some degree know what is meant. Thus, sitting at the right hand of God, merely means that he is exalted to the highest place in heaven, as placing a person on the right hand is considered on earth the mode of showing him honour. Let us now again return to the 1st chapter of the Acts, and read the account there given of his ascension. After he had shewn himself to them for forty days, and instructed them in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, he commanded them to remain in Jerusalem until they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And “when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same

Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." What a blessed, happy assurance was this; was it not, my dear child? No wonder that his disciples returned from the contemplation of this his glorious ascension with "great joy," or that they should be "continually praising and blessing God."

Caroline.—Perhaps, mamma, as the angels did not say when the time would be, that Jesus would return, they expected that it would be *very soon*, and that would make them very happy.

Mamma.—Such a belief was, I believe, very prevalent, and would, no doubt, support them through many of the trials and persecutions which they had to endure; indeed, you may remember, that when St. Paul is speaking to the Thessalonians, upon the subject of our Lord's second coming, he tells them to "comfort one another with these words." But it could not be the idea of his *speedy*

return to them, which filled the apostles “with great joy,” because they had also been told by Him, that before that time should come, “they must themselves be brought before kings and rulers for his name’s sake,”⁷ “and be persecuted and delivered up to the synagogues;” and still further, they knew that the Gospel must *first* be preached unto all nations, before the end should come; they could not, therefore, expect his return very soon, but they must have rejoiced in the assurance that “it was, indeed, He who should redeem Israel.” They must have rejoiced to think that they should be deemed worthy to be His messengers to preach the glad tidings to all the world; and they must have rejoiced in the thoughts that the “*promised*” *Comforter*,⁸ “who should lead and guide them into all truth,”⁹ was soon to appear. But *we*

⁷ Matt. xxiv., also Luke xxi. ⁸ John xiv. 26.

⁹ John xvi. 13.

too, ought, with the apostles, to be filled with joy, at the remembrance of this His glorious ascension into heaven. For He has told us, that in His Father's house are many mansions, and that He is gone to 'prepare a place there, for those who believe in Him, and that He will come again, and receive them unto himself; that where *He is*, *there* shall they be also.¹ And this blessed promise, we know he afterwards confirmed, for in the 3d chapter of the Revelation he says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." The promise that "He will come again," should not only fill us with joy, but also the remembrance, that "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." For he is *there*, as our great High Priest, to intercede for us. Let us also consider the exhortation of

¹ John xiv. 2, 3.

St. Paul, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God ; set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

Caroline.—Mamma, I do not understand all the meaning of that verse ; I think I understand what it means, to set our affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. It means, we must not love any thing in this world so much as God and heavenly things ; but then, What does being “dead with Christ,” and “risen with Christ, and our life being hid with God,” mean ?

Mamma.—I do not know whether I shall be able to make you understand perfectly the meaning, my dear child, but I will try. I have told you before, that God is pleased, in the Bible, to make use of such things as we can see and un-

derstand, to explain to us those heavenly or spiritual things, which otherwise we could not comprehend. This is called, speaking figuratively, meaning something which we can represent, or picture, or figure to ourselves, which shall supply the place of something which we cannot *literally* figure or represent. Thus the apostle has been explaining to the Colossians, that they had been, as it were, dead, because of their sins ; but that Christ, by his death and resurrection, had “ quickened,” or made them alive ; that they had been “ buried with him in baptism ;”² meaning, that in that holy rite they had professed a desire, as our own Church explains it in the service of Baptism, “ to be made like unto Him, that, as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness.”³ And that, as we are therefore risen with Christ, we should seek those things which are above, con-

² Coloss. ii. 12, 13.³ Baptismal Service.

stantly turning our thoughts to that spiritual life, which though it is now “hid from us with Christ in God,” yet, when “He who is *our life*,”—you may remember, my dear child, that He himself hath told us that he is “the way, the truth, and the life”—when, therefore, “He who is our life” “shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.” Let our thoughts then be continually on this glorious re-appearance, and “dwelling on the blessed hope of appearing with him in glory.” “This same Jesus,” said the angels, to those who were *gazing upwards*, and contemplating his ascension, “which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven;”⁴ and this naturally brings us to the next article of the creed, which explains to us the object of that coming: “From thence,” that is to say from heaven, “he shall come to

⁴ Acts i. 11.

judge the quick and the dead.” But it is now too late to enter upon the subject of that great and awful day ; the bells are calling us to church, that happy place, which, as Watts, in his pretty hymn, so truly says, is “ like a little heaven below,” and in the evening you shall read and learn, if you like, some very pretty lines on the “ Sabbath Bell.”

“ The Sabbath bell ! the Sabbath bell !
To toil-worn men a soothing sound ;
Now labour rests beneath its spell,
And holy stillness reigns around :
The ploughman’s team, the thrasher’s flail,
The woodman’s axe, their clamours cease,
And only nature’s notes prevail,
To humble bosoms echoing peace.

“ The Sabbath bell ! the Sabbath bell !
How sweet on ears devout it falls :
While its sweet chime, with varying swell,
The rich and poor to worship calls,—
Hark ! hark ! again, with sharper peals,
It chides the laggard’s fond delay :
Now, through the vale it softly steals,
To cheer the timely on their way.

“ The Sabbath bell ! the Sabbath bell !
What soul-awakening sounds we hear,
Its blessed invitations tell
Of welcome to the house of prayer.—
‘ Come sinner, come,’ it seems to cry ;
‘ Oh ! never doubt thy Maker’s love ;
Christ has thy ransom paid,’ then, why
Delay his clemency to prove ?

“ The Sabbath bell ! the Sabbath bell !
Oft have we heard its warning chime,
And yet we love the world too well,
Nor feel our waywardness a crime :
Yet still thy calls, sweet bell, repeat,
Till ended all our mortal strife,
In hand-built shrines no more we meet,
But worship in the realms of life.

“ The Sabbath bell ! the Sabbath bell !
Its friendly summons peal no more ;
The thronging crowds pour in with zeal,
The great Jehovah to adore :
Hence, fancy wild ! hence, earth-born care !
With awe let hallowed courts be trod ;
Wake all the soul to love and prayer,
And reverence the present God.”

DIALOGUE XX.

Mamma.—We have, for our meditation this morning, an awful subject—the second coming of our Lord to judgment. From heaven, where he now sitteth at the right hand of God, shall “he come to judge the quick and the dead.” You know what this expression, “the quick,” means?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, it means, those which shall be alive.

Mamma.—It is not possible, for any one who reads the Bible and believes it to be the Word of God; to doubt of a future day of judgment, because the passages of Scripture which expressly declare, that we must render an account, not only of every deed, but

of every word and every thought, are too numerous for us to read them all *now*; but let us look for *some* of the texts that reveal to us this most important truth. Solomon tells us, that from his own bitter experience he had found all the pomps and pleasures, the riches and glories of this world, but “vanity and vexation of spirit;” and he ends his instructions by bidding us, “Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”⁵ Our Saviour himself expressly informs us, that we shall be judged not only for our deeds, but our words. “But I say unto you, that every *idle word* that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment;”⁶ and even the very thoughts of our hearts are known unto him, “for the Lord seeth not as man

⁵ Ecclesiastes xii. 13, 14. ⁶ Matt. xii. 36, 37.

seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”⁷ Do you remember what part of the Bible this is in ?

Caroline.—Oh yes, mamma, very well. God told Samuel to go to the house of Jesse, when he had said that Saul should be no longer king, for that he had chosen one of Jesse’s sons to be king, and Samuel was to go and anoint him. And when he saw the eldest son, because he was so tall and so handsome, he thought God must have chosen him, but God told him, he had not chosen him, but David ; and then follows that verse, “The Lord seeth not as man seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”

Mamma.—This verse alone would be enough, my dear child, to prove to us, that even the thoughts of our hearts are known unto Him, from whom no secrets can be hid ; and though we could find

⁷ 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

many others, we will content ourselves with one from the New Testament ; St. Paul says, “ The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the *thoughts* and *intentions* of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in *his* sight ; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”⁸ This subject is so important an one, and is so full of comfort, as well as “ profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,”⁹ that we had better pause and consider it. It is full of comfort, that “ the Lord seeth not as *man* seeth.” Man may harshly judge, man may condemn us, but God knoweth our *hearts*, and therefore it is “ a very small thing to be judged of man’s judgment.”¹ “ Let me fall now,” says David,

⁸ Heb. iv. 12, 13. ⁹ 2 Tim. iii. 16. ¹ 1 Cor. iv. 3.

“into the hand of the Lord ; for very great are his mercies : but let me not fall into the hand of man.”² It is a comfort too, to remember that He sees our hearts, when we have not the power to perform those outward acts of homage, which His own Holy Spirit prompts us, to *wish* to do. “Whereas it was in thine heart,” he says to David, “to build an house unto my name, thou didst *well* that it *was* in *thine heart*. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house.”³ It is a comfort also, that “he that judgeth us is the Lord,” when in the hour of trial or temptation our faith fails us, and we give way to *sinful fears* and doubts, and cry out, The Lord hath forsaken us, he hath “forgotten to be gracious.”⁴ “He knoweth our frame ; He remembereth that we are dust.”⁵ He seeth, when “the Spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak,”⁶ and he has pity on our infirmities.

² 1 Chron. xxi. 13.

³ 1 Kings viii. 18, 19.

⁴ Psalm lxxvii. 9. ⁵ Psalm ciii. 14. ⁶ Mark xiv. 38.

Caroline.—Yes, dear mamma, and it is a comfort to remember that God sees us, when we are in our beds at night, for even if we were silly enough to think we could take care of ourselves in the day, when we are awake, and active, and strong; what could we do for ourselves while we are asleep? But we know that God can see us, and that the “darkness is no darkness with Him.”

Mamma.—Yes, my love, in all these circumstances it is indeed a comfort to know, “that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do;” but, we must also remember, that it is the Gospel alone, which thus reveals Him to us as a God of love and mercy. We are “by nature the children of wrath,”⁷ and it is only through Christ “that we have access by the Spirit to the Father.”⁸ If it had not been revealed to us by the Gospel,

⁷ Ephesians ii. 3.

⁸ Ephesians ii. 18.

that “our peace”⁹ is made *by Him*, and that we who were “afar off,” are now reconciled, and may through His intercession approach God as our Father, the knowledge that He, who “is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity”¹ but with abhorrence, should yet be “a discerner even of the very thoughts and intents of the heart,” could only have filled us with fear and dread. This indeed we see, in the miserable state of the heathen. To them, God is only a God of fear, and they practise upon themselves various tortures, offering even their children and themselves as sacrifices, in hopes of propitiating their angry God ; for even they have a belief in a future judgment. I believe there is no nation whose inhabitants, however barbarous, however savage, have not *some* ideas of another state after death ; but to us, who have

⁹ Col. i. 19, and following verses. ¹ Hab. i. 13.

the Bible, it is plainly revealed, “for we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”² Is it not extraordinary that with this *certainty* of *future* judgment before our eyes, we should ever be occupied in *vain* or *frivolous* pursuits? or that we should forget to view every object, every event, as it may be viewed on *that* great and awful day? “Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do,” says St. Paul, “do all to the glory of God.”³ How can we dare to act in a foolish or thoughtless manner when our Lord himself has told us, that for every “idle word” we must give an account? It is vain for us to deceive ourselves with the persuasion that it will be time enough by-and-by to think of these things. The day of judgment, that *last*, that awful day, *may*

² 2 Cor. v. 10.³ 1 Cor. x. 31.

be far distant, or it *may be* near at hand, for of “that day and that hour knoweth no man;”⁴ but of this we are *certain*, that death, which to us individually must determine our future state for ever—“for there is no work nor device in the grave,”⁵—*must come* to all (that is to say, *must come* to *all*, but those who will be alive when the day of judgment shall come); and no human being can know, whether “this” very “night,” this very moment, even, his “soul” may not be “required of him.” “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”⁶ “Take heed to yourselves,” says our blessed Lord, “lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so *that* day come upon you unawares: for *as a snare* shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and *pray always*,

⁴ Matt. xxiv. 36. ⁵ Eccles. ix. 10. ⁶ Heb. ix. 27.

that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”⁷ But though the *time when* this awful event shall take place, is concealed from us, the manner in which our Judge shall appear is fully revealed in many parts of the Scripture. “Hereafter,” says our Lord himself, “shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : ”⁸ and “all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”⁹ Remember that these are the words of our Lord himself, and he was also pleased to reveal the same

⁷ Luke xxi. 34—36.

⁸ 1 Thess. iv. 16.

⁹ John v. 28, 29.

thing to his beloved disciple John. “ I saw,” he tells us, “ a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God : and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works.”¹ And now I do not know how we can better conclude this subject than with the words of St. Peter. He has been foretelling that in the “ last days ” there will be “ scoffers,” who, because all things continue as they were from the creation, shall say, “ Where is the promise of

¹ Rev. xx. 11—13.

his coming?" but though it may be long delayed according to our ideas of time, we must remember that a "thousand years are as one day" to the Lord, and that this delay is occasioned by His mercy and "long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." But, he adds, "The day of the Lord *will come*, as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth,

wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.”² Let us, my dear child, make this our prayer, and that we may daily “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour both now and for ever.” Amen.

² 2 Peter iii. 10, and following verses.

DIALOGUE XXI.

Mamma.—We have again, my dear little girl, a most interesting subject for our morning's meditations. We have seen that the former part of our creed teaches us to confess our belief in "God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord." But there is a third person in whom we must believe—God the Holy Ghost. What does your Catechism say upon this subject? The question is asked: What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy belief?

Caroline.—The answer given in the Catechism is, First, I "learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the world. Secondly, in God

the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God.”

Mamma.—There are many parts of the Scriptures in which these three persons are distinctly and separately named. Our Saviour commanded his disciples to baptize all nations, “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” I will some other time show you, in the Old Testament, the numerous occasions on which the Second Person, God the Son, appeared to his people; for the “Lord” there spoken of is not always God the Father; our Saviour himself has told us, that no man hath ever seen “the Father.” Yet we know that “the Lord” appeared not only to Abraham, to Jacob, to Joshua, to Moses, and several individuals, at different periods, but also was seen of Moses, and Aaron, and Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel that went up

to Mount Sinai.¹ The Holy Ghost is also spoken of as God, and yet that same holy book assures us, that “The Lord our God is one Lord,”² and that he “will not give his glory to another.”³ Our Saviour himself also said, “I and my Father are one;”⁴ and in another place, when Philip said unto him, “Show us the Father and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”⁵ It is, therefore, quite evident from the Scriptures that we must believe in and worship the Lord God, and him only, as *one God*; and yet it is also equally plain, that the three persons are distinctly named with all the attributes of God; and to this TRIUNE, OR THREE IN ONE God, our Church gives the name of the Holy Trinity. We

¹ Exod. xxiv. 9—11. ² Deut. vi. 4.

³ Isaiah xlii. 8. ⁴ John x. 30. ⁵ John xiv. 8, 9.

must not pretend or seek to *understand it*. Many things are there about and around us, which as objects of sense we believe in ; we see them, and hear them, and feel them, but cannot tell whence they come or whither they go. Our own bodies possess a threefold nature all essentially different. First, our *bodily frames*, which, made of earth, must return to dust and see corruption. Secondly, our *minds*, or those faculties by which we can think and understand, and which, at least, while united in *this* world to the body, are greatly dependent upon the body ; because we see that an injury or disease of the brain will deprive even those most gifted and highly endowed of all powers of thought or reason. And, Thirdly, our *souls*, that immortal part which, when the body dies, returns to the God who gave it,⁶ and can never die ; but, as we have seen, while discoursing on the day of judgment, must, according to the

⁶ Eccles. xii. 7.

deeds which were done by it in the body, live in eternal happiness or misery. Our own bodies, therefore, furnish us with a *proof* of this threefold union; but this does not *explain it*, nor can it be understood while we continue in our present imperfect state. It is a mystery. As St. Paul says, “without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God* was manifest in the *flesh*, justified in the *Spirit*, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”⁷ But though we cannot understand it, we *must believe*. It is necessary to our salvation, to *believe* all that it has pleased the Almighty to reveal to us in the Scriptures.

Caroline.—But, mamma, if it is necessary to salvation to believe the things written in the Scriptures, what is to become of the poor heathen and those who have never seen or heard of the Scriptures?

⁷ 1 Timothy iii. 16.

Mamma.—This is again a subject which is involved in mystery, *Why* we should be so highly favoured while others remain in darkness? *Why* eighteen hundred years should have passed, since He that was to be “the light of the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel,” came into the world to save sinners, and yet two-thirds of the whole world still remain in the grossest ignorance? “*Why* these things should be permitted by Him, who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live?” are questions we cannot answer. Thus far has been revealed to us, “To whomsoever *much* is given, of *him* shall be *much* required.”⁸ It is the “servant that *knew* his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, that shall be beaten with many stripes,”⁹ not he that *knew it not*. St. Paul also tells us, “They that *sinned without the law*

⁸ Luke xii. 48.⁹ Luke xii. 47.

shall *perish without the law*: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law ; ”¹ *we have the law* revealed to us, and must take care that we walk according to the law—we have nothing to do with others : “ Who art thou that judgest another ? ”² We may feel quite assured that the “ Judge of all the earth will do right,” and we had better not bewilder ourselves with questions that are difficult and that we cannot understand ; but rather let us inquire whether we are following and practising all those things which are commanded us, that we *do know and understand*. God has never commanded us to do any thing without at the same time promising that help and strength shall be given us to perform it ; and this help and strength is given through the agency of the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost is given to all who ask for it : “ Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and

¹ Rom. ii. 12.² Jam. iv. 12.

it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent ? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?”³ And again, He says, “ If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you *for ever* ; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him, for he dwelleth *with you*, and and shall be *in you*.”⁴ “ When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will *guide*

³ Luke xi. 9—13.⁴ John xiv. 14, 16, 17.

you into all truth : He shall receive of mine, and show it unto you.”⁵ These promises were not only intended for the Apostles ; for our Saviour, in the beautiful prayer he offered up for *them*, adds : “ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.”⁶ Besides, in the New Testament we see innumerable instances in which the Holy Ghost was shed on multitudes at once ; and lest there should be any *doubt* upon this point, Peter on the day of Pentecost, the very day on which the Holy Ghost was first shed on the Apostles, says to those who were assembled, and who were we are told “ devout men out of every nation under heaven,”⁷ “ Repent and be baptized *every one* of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and *ye shall receive* the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to *your children*, and to *all* that are *afar off*, even

⁵ John xvi. 13, 14. ⁶ John xvii. 20. ⁷ Acts ii. 5.

as many as the Lord our God shall call.”⁸ And the same day there were added unto them about *three thousand souls*. Remember, therefore, my dear child, that the Holy Ghost is *promised* to *all* that the “Lord our God shall call;” that *all are called* to whom the Gospel is preached; and they have only to *ask* and they *shall* receive it. I am very anxious that you should rightly understand this, because it was the very root and groundwork of the faith; because we *cannot* believe unto salvation without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, for “the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither *can he* know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”⁹ “It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you,”¹

⁸ Acts ii. 38, 39. ⁹ 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14. ¹ John xvi. 7.

said our Saviour to his disciples. If He had remained upon earth, those few by whom he was surrounded would alone have benefited by His presence and his instructions, but the Holy Spirit was to be with *all* his followers, for the promise is, that he shall be with us, and *in us*, leading and directing us. When our Lord took upon him our human nature, and appeared upon earth, he achieved the mighty work of redemption, suffering death upon the cross, that guilty sinners might be reconciled unto God,—and *that* work he told us was “*finished.*” Do you not remember when he said it?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, in the 17th chapter of John, it is related, that “He lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they

might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have *finished* the *work* which thou gavest me to do." And afterwards on the cross—I will look for the place in the Bible, it is in the 19th chapter of St. John; here it is, the 28th verse: "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Mamma.—This great and wonderful work being *finished*, "He ascended on high, and received gifts for men, yea even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them." That this passage from the 68th Psalm, alludes to our Saviour's ascension into heaven, and

the descent of the Holy Ghost, we know from many parts of the New Testament ; and St. Peter on the day of Pentecost says, “ Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”² Never forget, my dear little girl, that this Holy Spirit, without which we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, is promised to all that ask for it. It is true we are weak, and unable of ourselves to do any thing, or even think any thing good, but the Holy Spirit “ helpeth our infirmities ; ”³ it is true, “ that in us (that is in our flesh) dwelleth no good thing : for how to perform that which is good we find not.”⁴ “ So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God ; ”⁵ but if the Spirit of God *dwelleth in us*, we are *not* in the flesh but in the Spirit, and being

² Acts ii. 33. ³ Rom. viii. 26. ⁴ Rom. vii. 18.

⁵ Rom. viii. 8.

led by the Spirit, we shall walk as the children of God, “unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”⁶

⁶ Coloss. i. 10.

DIALOGUE XXII.

Mamma.—On some future opportunity, if the Almighty Disposer of all events should prolong our lives and give us that *future* opportunity, we will again refer to the interesting and delightful subject of the Holy Spirit; for I feel that I have not said half that may be said, or brought forward from the Scriptures, to prove that it is by the influence of the Holy Spirit *only*, that the “things of God can be shown unto us, and our footsteps guided into the way of truth.” We have now to consider, and we may do so briefly, the remaining articles of the Creed. What follows, “I believe in the Holy Ghost.”

Caroline.—“The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness

of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

Mamma.—This has been divided into four articles, we will, therefore, now consider the first of these four, which is the 9th article of the Creed : “the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints.” The word Church you have already had explained to you. It is used in the Bible frequently, and in the fullest sense of the word means, all those who, from the beginning of the world, have believed in God, and served him according to the light they have received, and who shall in the end be all gathered together, “as one fold under one shepherd.”¹ All Christians are called members of that body of which Christ is the head, and this body is called the Church ; against this Church our Saviour has promised “the gates of hell shall not prevail,” though Satan may raise up persecutions against it, and endeavour in many ways

¹ John x. 16.

to corrupt it; still he shall not prevail, for a time shall come, for which we ought most earnestly and diligently to pray, when every “kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,”² shall worship the Lord in spirit and in truth; “For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.”³ This declaration is from the Prophet Malachi, but the passages are very numerous which foretel a period when all the world shall know the Lord, “from the least unto the greatest.”⁴

Caroline.—I understand the meaning of the word “Church,” mamma, and I know why it is called “holy,” because all its members, or all Christians, ought to be holy. I will find a text about it;

² Rev. v. 9.

³ Malachi i. 11.

⁴ Jeremiah xxxi. 34.

it is in the 12th chapter of Hebrews, you showed it to me the other day, “Follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord.”⁵ The Church of Christ then ought to be indeed holy,—but why is it called catholic? What is the meaning of the word catholic?

Mamma.—The meaning of the word catholic is, universal. I believe the word was originally used to mark the great difference between the Church of Christ and the Jewish Church in *this* particular, for the Gospel of Christ was to be preached to *all* nations; and, therefore, His Church was to be an universal or catholic one, and in the Creed you acknowledge, that every follower of Christ is united with Christ into one body, which should be holy and universal, each member of it; however far divided; though inhabiting different countries; speaking different languages; yet all

⁵ Heb. xii. 14.

united in one holy “communion” of love. “For through Christ we have all access by one Spirit unto the Father : and are therefore no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”⁶ “Having one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.”⁷ And in the 12th chapter of Corinthians, we find this communion or fellowship most earnestly enforced. Let us look for the chapter and begin at the 12th verse, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body : so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”⁸ He then goes on to prove that God has ap-

⁶ Eph. ii. 18, 19. ⁷ Eph. iv. 5, 6.

⁸ 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

pointed to each member his particular station, as each member of our own body has its particular office, and adds, “There should be no schism in the body; but the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”⁹ Such ought to be, my dear child, and such indeed is the union which exists between those who, in the language of Scripture are called, “the saints.” “We know that we have passed from death unto life, *because we love the brethren,*”¹ says St. John, but the “communion of saints,” means more than mere fellowship in this world with each other, it extends beyond the grave, for St. Paul says, “Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and

⁹ 1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

¹ 1 John iii. 14.

church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.”² Now, in these verses, there are some things about the “heavenly Jerusalem,” and the “city of the living God,” which you cannot understand, and which I will not just now even try to explain to you, as I referred to these verses to show that St. Paul speaks, not only of our being in communion, or “fellowship” with God the Father, and of “his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,”³ (which holy fellowship St. John also assures us of when he says, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,”⁴) but also of our being “come to an innumerable company of angels,”

² Heb. xii. 22—24.³ 1 Cor. i. 9.⁴ 1 John i. 3.

and the “general assembly of the church of the firstborn which are written in heaven,” (by which assembly, I think is meant, the saints of the Jewish or first-born Church, “righteous Abel,” and Noah, and Abraham, and holy Daniel, and all those who through “faith inherited the promises”), and “the spirits of just men made perfect ;” those who have died in the faith of Christ since he came to make them “perfect through Him.” With all this holy assembly, though while we remain “in the body,” we cannot visibly have communication with them, they being “spirits,” and, therefore, only to be “spiritually discerned,” we are privileged to join in the blessed work of prayer and praise. And is it not a delightful thought to believe that there is a union which nothing can dissolve, not even death itself; but that those we have loved on earth are together with us offering praises, and praying for that blessed time, when we shall together

with our glorified bodies rejoice around the throne of God for ever and ever. This delightful subject has occupied us longer than I thought it would, and there is not now time to enter upon the remaining articles before church-time ; let us, therefore, as a most appropriate subject for our meditation, as connected with the final triumph of the Church of Christ, and the communion of saints, read a part of that sublime description, revealed to us by the Spirit, through his holy Apostle John, of that time of future glory. Look for the 7th chapter of Revelations, and begin at the 9th verse, and read to the end.

Caroline.—“ After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which

sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and about the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen ; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes ? and whence came they ? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple : and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall

the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

DIALOGUE XXIII.

Mamma.—We are this morning, my dear little girl, to consider the remaining articles of the Creed : “ the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting ;” and has it not already occurred to you, that unless we could feel assured of “ the forgiveness of sins,” all that we have been told concerning the happiness of heaven, would have been revealed to us in vain ? It could only have added to our misery and despair ; for we know that God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ; that all sin is hateful to him, and that we have all sinned, and if we should say, “ We have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”¹ We are “ by nature the

¹ 1 John i. 8.

children of wrath,"² and well might we tremble, knowing that we deserve only "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." Who, indeed, should "abide the day of his coming? or who should stand when he appeareth?"³ did we not know that "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,"⁴ and that he is the propitiation for our sins. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" says David. "But," he adds, "there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared."⁵ Wretched, indeed, would the knowledge of the "resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting," make us, could we not feel assured, that God, for Christ's sake, would forgive us our sins; but we know that it was for this very purpose he left his Father's throne; "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was

² Eph. ii. 3. ³ Malachi iii. 2. ⁴ 1 John ii. 1.

⁵ Psalm cxxx. 3, 4.

upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”⁶ Having then the blessed assurance that “ through him we receive the remission of our sins,”⁷ we may with joy believe that our bodies shall rise again from the grave, and be made partakers of everlasting life.

Caroline.—I do not quite understand this, mamma. I thought it was our souls that never died, but that our bodies were put in the grave and returned to dust.

Mamma.—And so it is, my dear little child. The sentence upon Adam and all his posterity was, “ Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”⁸ But at the same time the promise was given of a Saviour who should triumph over all things, and destroy the power of death ; and the Lord has been pleased to reveal

⁶ Isaiah liii. 5, 6. ⁷ Acts xiii. 38, 39 ; Heb. vii. 25.

⁸ Genesis iii. 19.

to us, that our *bodies* shall rise again, at the last day, when the sea shall give up her dead, and the grave shall restore the bodies that have been consigned to it.⁹

“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”¹ We must die and return to dust, as the children of Adam; but as the children of Christ, redeemed by him, we shall rise again at the last day. But our soul, that immortal part of us, which cannot *die*, when it leaves the body, which is to be returned to the dust from whence it came, “returns to God who gave it,”² and remains, as we may find in many parts of Scripture, in paradise “with the spirits of just men made perfect;” waiting, as we are told in the parable of the “rich man and Lazarus,” the good, in the blessed society of Abraham, and the

⁹ Rev. xx. 12, 13. ¹ 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

² Eccles. xii. 7, also Gen. ii. 7.

saints, and angels, and also, as St. Paul tells us, “with the Lord,” and the wicked in torment, knowing that there remains for them only a fearful looking for of judgment.

Caroline.—I thought, mamma, that good people, the moment they died, went to heaven, and the wicked to live with Satan and his wicked angels ; then why should the body rise again at the last day ?

Mamma.—Many persons, my dear little girl, have made themselves unhappy and perplexed others, by asking such questions, and endeavouring to throw *doubts* upon what has been revealed to us so plainly by God himself. It *ought* to be sufficient to us that God has said it ; and if our bodies should have “returned to dust,” and been blown “to the four winds of heaven,” He who originally created us, can by His word, if he pleases, raise us up again. There is, however, much to be found on this

interesting subject in the Scriptures ; for when our Saviour “ put the Sadducees to silence ” on this subject, who were “ the scoffers of those days, and said, “ There was no resurrection,” he told them, they “ erred, *not knowing the Scriptures.*”³ It is to the Scriptures then we ought to look for information, and I think what is told us *there* is quite plain enough, for such poor ignorant worms as we are, and ought to fill us with joy and gratitude that *so much* has been revealed to us. We will first consider the state of the soul after death, and then return to the subject of the body. First, then, in answer to your question—Why should the body rise again at the last day, if the soul has been in heaven since the time of the death of the body ?—there is no part of the Scriptures which tells us that the soul *does* go to what is understood by the term heaven ; on the contrary, our

³ Matt. xxii. 23—33.

Saviour expressly tells Mary *after* his resurrection that *He* had “not *yet* ascended to his Father;”⁴ and we are told also that He appeared to them, several times during forty days, before His ascension. *Where*, then, was He in the meantime? He has himself told us, “Verily, I say unto thee,” was his gracious reply to the thief upon the cross, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”⁵ In this same paradise, with all those who “died in the faith,” with the saints of old, with “the spirits of just men made perfect,” with an “innumerable company of angels,” and gladdened in some way or other, with the “presence of the Lord,”⁶ the blessed happy soul shall “rest” from all its earthly “labours,” till the final resurrection, when its “works shall follow:”⁷ then shall the body rise, and, reunited to the soul, shall receive its *final* judgment.

⁴ John xx. 17.⁵ Luke xxiii. 43.⁶ 2 Cor. v. 8.⁷ Rev. xiv. 13.

I have heard or read somewhere, but cannot remember where, a reason given why this awful judgment cannot in justice be pronounced till the “end of all things,” for not till *then* can it be determined what amount of good or evil each individual has to be responsible for. “Their works” do indeed “*follow them.*” They who have “turned many to righteousness” shall shine “as the stars for ever and ever,”⁸—they whose light has so shone before men, that seeing *their* good works, *others* have been led to glorify their Father which is in heaven, will then find multitudes whom they have never known or seen before, that shall “rise up and call them blessed.” No man, however solitary he may be, however insignificant he may think himself, but has an influence on some one or other of his fellow-creatures by his example and conversation, and if he has turned but “*one* soul to righteousness,” who

⁸ Dan. xii. 3.

can number the amount of those who may through his means be led into the way of truth? For the promise of mercy is not only to "children's children," but even to "*thousands*" of generations of them that "love" the "Lord." Thus also, "the evil that men do, lives after them." And in this manner the "idle words," the "jestings which are not convenient," the "whispered slanders," may rise up in judgment against them, as having injured or corrupted some one, whom they ought rather to have been leading on to "holy conversation."

Caroline.—I think I understand *now*, mamma, what you have been telling me. When we die, our souls are immediately taken to some place, where the souls of all those who have died before us are also waiting. Then, as our Saviour tells us in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the good are divided from the wicked; then, when the end of the world comes, the body will rise again,

and will be joined together again with the soul, to give account of its works, and be judged; and then, as our Saviour tells us, to some he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" to others, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" But, what sort of bodies shall we have? I suppose we shall be like the angels.

Mamma.—Our Saviour tells us we shall be "*as* the angels," but we must not bewilder ourselves with questions of what we shall be like, because St. John tells us, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like *Him*: for we shall see *him* as he is."⁹ To see Him and to be like Him—surely this blessed assurance ought to suffice and fill our souls with grateful joy. Yet

⁹ 1 John iii. 2.

difficult as this subject may be to understand or explain, we have before our eyes constantly a beautiful emblem of it. And did we *not see it* with *our eyes*; were we only to read it described by others, we might as easily doubt the truth or probability of so wonderful a change, as to doubt the resurrection of the body. Did you not bring home a very beautiful caterpillar the other day ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, but it is now dead.

Mamma.—No, my love, it is not dead, though it appears to be so, has it not changed in its appearance ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, it has rolled itself up in a covering something like white cotton ; and I know, because you told me so, that in the spring it will burst its covering and appear again as a moth or butterfly ; you did not know *which*, you said, because you did not know what kind of caterpillar it was.

Mamma.—Can we then have a more

striking illustration of the grave, the intermediate state, and the resurrection. The caterpillar may be compared to the body now lying in the grave, but in the body of the caterpillar is contained the form of the future butterfly. It was a crawling insect with numerous legs, of a nature apparently totally different to that in which it will re-appear, when much more beautiful in every respect, adorned perhaps with various colours, it will spread its wings, and no longer confined to the earth, soar above it in the air, or flying from flower to flower, rejoice in the glorious sunshine and in its renewed existence.

And now let us conclude this most delightful subject, (for it is needless, if we are convinced that our bodies shall rise again, to prove that the sentence which then awaits them will be for ever, we have already read so many texts on that subject,) let us now conclude with St. Paul's most beautiful, most animating

account of the resurrection, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, the 15th chapter. The Apostle begins by assuring them that Christ was indeed risen from the dead, and that as in Adam all had died, so in Christ should all be made alive. He answers those who say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? by the comparison of sowing a seed in the ground, which, though only sown a grain, is raised in another form. "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to *every seed* his own body." "So also," he adds, "is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." He continues to show, that as we bore the image of Adam in this world, so shall we

bear the image of Christ in the next, and that our bodies will possess a nature totally different, and be wholly spiritual, no longer subject to death or natural infirmities, for that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, or corruption incorruption.” Then animated with the glorious prospect, he breaks out into a strain of the most sublime and beautiful language. “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is

thy victory? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

FINIS.

THE
YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S
SUNDAY MORNINGS.

DIALOGUE XXIV.

Mamma.—We are now come, my dear little girl, to a change in the Service, the compilers of our Liturgy having wisely varied it, so that the mind should not become wearied by dwelling too much on one subject. Let us turn to the beginning of the prayers, and read again what is called “The Exhortation.” What did the minister call upon us to do? Read it carefully, and tell me if you can yourself point out those parts of his instructions which we have fol-

lowed, in the services which *preceded* (or went before) the profession of our belief.

Caroline.—(After reading the Exhortation.)—We have confessed our sins, mamma, in the Confession, and we have offered praises in the hymns and psalms, and—and—

Mamma.—Have we not also “heard his most holy Word” in the Lessons? We are now, then, to “ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul;” but before we begin, I should like you to read from this little book, some very beautiful remarks upon the verses which *follow* the Belief, and precede these prayers. When I began these conversations with you, my dear little girl, I did not know that there was any book upon this most interesting subject, fitted for the comprehension of little children; and it was not until after the first part of what I have written for you had been

sent to the printer, that I saw this very nice little book. If I *had*, I should have read this with you, as it appears to contain all that I can say to explain the subject to you, and I should not have thought of writing anything myself.

Caroline.—Oh, mamma! then I am very glad you did not see it, for I like best to talk to you *myself*, and look at the texts with you for *myself*; and I hope you will go on writing for *me*. Perhaps I shall not always ask the same questions little William did. I am glad you never saw the book before.

Mamma.—As you wish it, my love, I will continue writing for you, but I could not, I am sure, express my own feelings so well as they are expressed in this very beautiful sentence. Read from this part to the bottom of the next page.*

Caroline.—“ As it was in the Temple

* See an admirable little work, entitled, “ First Sundays at Church,” by the Rev. J. E. Riddle.

of Solomon, the further you went in, the more sacred was the ground which you were treading, so it is with this magnificent structure, the Liturgy of our Church. We have, as it were, entered the gate ; we have been sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice ; we have offered up the incense of praise ; and now we go to appear before the mercy-seat of the Most High, advancing with a holy boldness to the throne of grace, with the catalogue of our wants, with our prayers and intercessions. But before we proceed to the Prayers, we meet one of those beautiful and ancient practices which are often so admirably preserved in our Liturgy, I mean, the mutual salutation of minister and people, in that address of the minister, ‘ The Lord be with you,’ and the answer of the people, ‘ And with thy spirit.’ These versicles, we are told, are found in the Western Liturgy, ascribed to St. Peter, and in most of the liturgies of the East.

When some persons proposed to alter these expressions, a Council, held in the year 535, not only ratified this form of salutation, but enjoined that it should be used without variation, according to the custom of all the East; where, as the Acts of the Council inform us, it was looked upon as an apostolic institution. The practice, therefore, which is retained in our Church, is, at all events, of very high antiquity. The salutation of the minister, ‘The Lord be with you,’ is strictly scriptural. Boaz said to the reapers, * ‘The Lord be with you;’ and they answered him, ‘The Lord bless thee.’ St. Paul also uses the expression, ‘The Lord be with you all,’† and, ‘The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.’”‡

Mamma.—You remember, my love, who the Boaz alluded to was?

Caroline.—O yes, mamma; he was the good rich man, in whose fields poor Ruth went to glean; and while the

* Ruth ii. 4. † 2 Thess. iii. 16. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 2.

reapers were at their work, he came into the field, and said, "The Lord be with you;" and they answered, "The Lord bless thee." I was thinking yesterday,* in church, that I liked these verses, and the manner in which the clergyman said, "The Lord be with you;" and I thought that the answer *meant*, that *we* should in return pray for *him*.

Mamma.—Yes, my love, it does; and I always feel it a most affecting part of the service. If we *really believe* in the efficacy of prayer, if we not only believe that God "is," but that he is also "a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," that he not only heareth, but *answereth* prayer, we shall earnestly desire the prayers of his servants, and feel assured that they will bring down upon us a blessing; and we shall also offer up our prayers for others, and more especially for those upon whom so

* This observation was made during Passion Week.

awful a responsibility, so weighty a charge rests, as the care of the souls of men. St. Paul frequently inculcates this as a duty, and requests the prayers of his converts. We will look for *one* text on this subject ; and from several which present themselves, will select *that* which appears to me to place the duty in the strongest point of view. It is in the 6th chapter of the Ephesians, the 18th, 19th, and 20th verses : “ Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints ; and for *me*, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds : that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” St. Paul was at that time a prisoner in Rome, and doubtless was comforted in his affliction by the thought that many prayers were daily offered up

for him. I read somewhere lately, I cannot remember where, that a person was once finding great fault with the manner and preaching of the clergyman he had been hearing, when some one present asked if he who was thus ready to condemn him, had *ever prayed for him*, and especially *that day*, that “the Word of God might have free course, and be glorified in him?”* and if not, he certainly had no right to find fault, but should rather blame himself for having neglected his *own* duty.

Caroline.—Thank you, mamma; I hope I shall never forget, when I hear our minister say, “The Lord be with you,” to answer, with all my heart, “And with thy spirit.”

Mamma. — Having thus mutually prayed for a blessing upon each other, and desired that God will himself be with us, and grant us the assistance of the Holy Spirit, without whose help we

* 2 Thess. iii. 1.

cannot even pray as we ought, the minister calls upon us to join him in prayer, saying, in a solemn and impressive manner, "Let us pray." "This short and ancient exhortation," says Comber, "so often repeated in all the old liturgies, whereby the priest gives the signal of battle, or, the *watch-word*, to all the assembly, that they may set on their enemies (meaning, of course, their spiritual enemies) with courage, and besiege even heaven itself with a holy importunity. He enjoins you all to pray with him, and for one another; for it is a great work you have to do, and you must now take off your thoughts from all other things, and wholly mind this." And now, all sinking down on our knees, as the rubrick expresses it, "*all devoutly kneeling*," with deep humility, with unfeigned acknowledgments of our own utter worthlessness and misery, we implore the mercy of the Holy Trinity, saying, "Lord, have mercy upon us;

Christ, have mercy upon us ; Lord, have mercy upon us.” Unless he have mercy upon us, and in his great pity and compassion gives us his “ grace, whereby we may serve him *acceptably*, with reverence and godly fear,”* how shall we presume to present to him our petitions ? In those most beautiful of all compositions, the Psalms, we find these words frequently made use of—look for the 6th Psalm and the second verse, the first verse of the 51st Psalm, and in the 123d Psalm and the 3d verse, it is twice repeated :—“ Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us !” Feeling, as every one must who thinks at all, our urgent *need* of mercy, I can hardly imagine any one not being deeply affected at this part of the service. “ Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon us !” was the earnest cry of many afflicted ones, while he was on the earth ; and never do we find that cry unheard,

* Heb. xii. 28.

or that mercy refused ; and has he less power *now*, when he is ascended on high, and sitteth on the right hand of God, to make intercession for us for ever? Surely not. Earnestly, then, let us join in this humble supplication,—“ Lord, have mercy upon us.” The Lord’s Prayer again follows: and the reason why we should do so, is so well explained in this same little book, which I have already mentioned to you, in answer to little William’s question, on this subject, that you can read it for yourself; and I need not add anything to the remarks you will find there. The verses which follow the Lord’s Prayer, are, as those which *preceded* it, mostly taken from the Psalms, and are so plain and simple, that even a child must, I should think, understand them; but read them over, and see if there is anything which you do not understand.

Caroline (After reading and repeating

the verses).—No, mamma; I think I understand them all.

Mamma.—What follows, my love?

Caroline.—The Collects, mamma; but what is the meaning of the word Collect?

Mamma.—It is getting so late, that we must now be preparing for church; I must therefore delay till another day, answering your question.

DIALOGUE XXV.

Mamma.—The question you asked me last Sunday, my dear child, as to the meaning of the word Collect, I should not be able to answer, were it not that I have read what wiser and more learned persons have written. Some think they are called Collects, because they are *collected* from those portions of the Holy Scriptures that are read as the Epistle and Gospel for the same day ; others, that they take their name from “ the collection and gathering together of the people into religious assemblies.” * They are very beautiful, and generally so plain and simple as to require no explanation. We will, however, should it please God

* See “ First Sundays at Church.”

to enable us to continue this our interesting occupation to the end of the morning and evening service, make the Collects a separate subject, and only *now* remember that what is called the Collect for *the day* is read *first*, and only on the day on which it is appointed to be read ; while those called the Collects for “Peace” and “Grace” are read every time the Liturgy is read. They are so plain and easy, there can hardly be anything to *explain* in them ; but they are so beautiful, though so simple, and contain so much, though in so few words, that I think we shall like to talk about them a little while, and more especially to look for those texts of Scripture on which, like the rest of our Liturgy, they are founded. Read the Collect, my love, and tell me what the Almighty is here called.

Caroline (after having read the Collect).—“The Author of peace and lover of concord.”

Mamma.—This very title alone will furnish us with a delightful subject for thought, and bring many, many texts to our remembrance. There are many different ways in which the word, “Peace,” is used in the Scriptures. There is peace with God, by the blood of Christ, who is therefore called “our peace.”* The “Prince of Peace”† is one of the titles given to him by Isaiah ; and “peace on earth” was announced by the angels, as the consequence of his birth, in that glorious hymn which the happy shepherds heard while “watching their flocks by night.” But in this sense spiritual peace is the blessing promised, while the prayer in the Collect is evidently for peace, as opposed to a state of warfare. Now, the whole world would be at peace if all people would act as Christians ought to do ; but I fear, as long as this world remains as it is, there will be “wars and rumours of wars :” but so

* Eph. ii. 14.

† Isaiah ix. 6.

great are the miseries of war, that every one who loves his country ought earnestly to pray that God will “bless his people with peace ;” * and he will rejoice to hear their prayers, for he is the “lover of concord.” I think, my dear little girl, you will yourself be able to remember many texts which prove *this*. What is the meaning of concord ?

Caroline.—Agreeing with one another, and living in unity with one another. You know, dear mamma, Grandmamma so often tells us, unless we live in unity with one another we cannot be *God’s children* ; for she says, “God ‘maketh men to be of one mind in an house ;’ ” † and our Saviour says, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” ‡ Besides, it is the “peace-makers” § that are called “the children of God.”

Mamma.—Yes, my love, it is indeed “a good and pleasant thing for brethren

* Psalm xxix. 11. † Ibid. lxviii. 6, in the
Prayer-Book. ‡ Matt. xii. 25. § Ibid. v. 9.

to dwell together in unity ;”* and it is indeed true, that those cannot be God’s children who do not do so. The Apostles, in all their epistles, constantly exhort Christians to be of “one mind,” and we might occupy ourselves a long time in looking out for the texts on this subject, so numerous are they : but we will now content ourselves with one, as it is very appropriate to exemplify the Collect, including both union and peace. It is in the Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, the 13th chapter and the 11th verse. Read it, my love.

Caroline.—“ Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of *one mind*, live in *peace*, and the God of love and peace *shall be* with you.” Oh, mamma, that is a beautiful verse !

Mamma.—Yes, my love, and contains so blessed a promise, that it is indeed a marvel to think that those who call

* Psalm cxxxiii. 1.

themselves Christians, should not strive and pray so to live that they might with confidence say, “the God of love and peace” was with them. Now, let us go on with the Collect. What follows “Oh! God, who art the Author of peace and lover of concord?”

Caroline.—“In knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life; whose service is perfect freedom.”

Mamma.—Do you think you understand this? If not, it will be made quite plain if you turn to the First Epistle of John, 5th chapter and 11th verse—“And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” Our Saviour, too, himself tells us—“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”* In this “knowledge,” therefore, “standeth,” or consisteth, “our eternal life.” We must now look for those texts which

* John xvii. 3.

prove that the service of God is “perfect freedom.” “Know ye not,” St. Paul says, “that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness.”* Now the servants of Satan are under a much more cruel bondage than the poor Israelites were under Pharaoh; especially are they “under bondage” from “the fear of death :”† but the servants of the Lord need fear no evil, for Christ has conquered him “that had the power of death,” and delivered them from this cruel “bondage ;” so that those who are “led by the Spirit of God” are called “the sons of God,”‡ the “children of God ;” and “if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Well, then, indeed may it be said, that the service of God is “perfect freedom,” like that which chil-

* Rom. vi. 16, to the end.

† Heb. ii. 15.

‡ Rom. viii. 14.

dren love to render to a father, taking a delight in doing those things which shall please him, and rendering a willing and cheerful obedience : yet still, knowing our own utter helplessness and dependence, we acknowledge ourselves to be but “servants,” and beseech him to defend us “in all assaults of our enemies.” It is not, you observe my dear child, *from*, but *in*, all assaults of our enemies ; because, while we remain in this world, we shall and must be subject to numerous dangers. We are no where promised that we shall not meet with many enemies, both from without and within ; on the contrary, are continually *warned*, that we shall be frequently exposed to the assaults of both. “In the world,” says our Saviour, “ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer, *I have overcome the world.*” * What we pray for, therefore, is, that “*surely trusting*” in the defence of the Almighty,

* John xvi. 33.

we “may not *fear* the power of any adversaries,” “through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.” Knowing, therefore, that our Redeemer *is mighty*, we may feel that “perfect peace”* which is promised to those who trust in him. What is the next Collect called ?

Caroline.—The Collect for Grace.

Mamma.—This Collect is so easy to comprehend, that any one, however young, must understand it ; and perhaps you may have no questions to ask about it : if you have, we must delay them till next Sunday, as it is now time to go to church.

Caroline.—I have some questions to ask, mamma ; besides, I like to look for the texts in the Bible from which the Collects have been taken, or which prove that what we are praying for is promised us in the Bible : and then, you know, mamma, if it is promised us by God himself, we must be sure we are right in asking for it.

* Isaiah xxvi. 3.

DIALOGUE XXVI.

Caroline.—We are this morning, dear mamma, to look for texts to explain the third Collect in the morning service, called the “Collect for Grace.” I should like to understand better the meaning of the word grace. There must be more meanings to it than one, for we call the prayer said before and after meals, a *grace*. Now this is called a prayer for grace, so that I do not quite understand it.

Mamma.—You are quite right, my dear little girl, in wishing to have every word explained that you do not “*quite* understand ;” and also right in supposing that there are more meanings than one attached to the word grace ;

but I fear I shall not be able to explain them to *you* perfectly, even though I may fancy I understand them myself. I think we shall find, upon examination, that in *one* sense, however variously it may be used, it means the same thing—favour and goodness on the part of the giver, undeserved by the receiver of the benefit. Wherever the words, “the grace of God,” or “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” are used, it certainly means the unmerited love, and mercy, and favour of God towards us; but it also means, the gift or assistance of the Holy Spirit, enabling *us* to obey his will and to resist evil; and without that grace it is not possible for us to do anything according to his will. It is in this sense it is used in the Collect we are now reading, which is a very beautiful and appropriate prayer for the commencement of *each day*, as well as for the commencement of the prayers in the church. We entreat “our Heavenly

Father," our " Lord," the " Almighty and everlasting God," whose mercies are " new every morning,"* and who has safely brought us to the beginning of another day, to defend us in the same by his mighty power. By thus entreating the aid of the Almighty, we acknowledge our own utter helplessness, our inability to take care of ourselves, and that we are safe only when his presence goes with us ;† and we implore not only his protection, but the assistance of his grace, to prevent us falling into any sin or running into any danger. As it is by his grace alone we can be kept from sin, we therefore pray that "*all* our doings may be *ordered* by" his " governance," and that we may *always do* those things which are " righteous in his sight ;" and these petitions, as all others, we offer through our Mediator and Intercessor Jesus Christ. We see, therefore, that this Collect is called " the Collect

* Lam. iii. 23.

† Exod. xxxiii. 15.

for Grace,” because it is a petition for the power to *do* what is “righteous in the sight of God,” which without his grace we cannot do. Do you remember any promises, my dear child, in the Bible, that are made to those “whose goings” or doings are ordered by the Lord? Let us look at the 37th Psalm: read the 23d and 24th verses, and tell me what is the promise given.

Caroline.—That the Lord will order (or *establish*, it is in the margin) the steps of a good man, so that, even if he fall he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord will uphold, or ho'd him up, I suppose it means, with his hand.

Mamma.—Yes, my dear child, that is the promise given in this Psalm, and also in many other parts of the Bible; and it may be thus illustrated:—See a little child just beginning to walk, guided by its mother or nurse. While the child leans on the hand of the nurse, it is safe: perhaps, anxious to go alone, the child

may push away or refuse the guiding hand, and falls ; but the watchful nurse is still close by, and before it can be hurt, supports it and raises it up. Just so with ourselves, if, like little helpless children, we wholly “ commit our ways ” to the Lord, and entreat of Him to guide our steps, we shall be safe ; though our afflictions or trials may be “ many,” * we shall be delivered from them all ; though we “ fall we shall rise again ; ” † though “ we may be perplexed,” ‡ we shall not “ despair ; ” though “ cast down, we shall not be destroyed,” for the Lord will uphold and sustain us. We have now to endeavour to find out in what other sense the word grace is used, and then we may return again to the Prayer-book. It is used by St. Paul, in speaking of spiritual gifts : he says to the Corinthians, “ Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge,

* Psalm xxxiv. 19. † Micah vii. 8.

‡ 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in *this grace* also.”* He is speaking of giving liberally towards providing for the wants of others. He calls this bountiful and charitable disposition “a grace.” It is sometimes used as implying the favour or friendship of men. It is said of Joseph, when in Potiphar’s house, that he “found grace in his sight;” and of Esther,† that she found grace and favour in the sight of the King. But why asking for a blessing upon what we are going to eat, or giving thanks for it, should be called saying grace, I cannot tell; as we do not find it used in this sense in the Scriptures, though the custom of always “giving thanks to God” before eating is a truly scriptural one. Our Saviour himself always “gave thanks” before he brake the bread and distributed it; and St. Paul frequently alludes to the custom, as if he supposed it impossible for any

* 2 Cor. viii. 7. † Esther ii. 17.

one to “eat or to drink” without giving “God thanks;” * and in writing to Timothy, he gives very particular directions upon this point, telling him that “every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.” † A meal, therefore, received without thanksgiving, or grace being said, may be called an unsanctified meal; though I am not able to explain to you positively why it is *called* saying *grace*. It is probably derived from our Norman ancestors, the French word *grace* meaning *thanks*. The word *grace* is also used to signify beauty of demeanour, whether of mind or person. Milton, speaking of Eve, says—

“Grace was in all her steps.”

A person’s manners are also said to be

* Rom. xiv. 6; and 1 Cor. x. 31.

† 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

graceful when they are elegant and pleasing. I think I have now mentioned all the ordinary meanings attached to the word, excepting that it was formerly used as a title when speaking to the King, who was styled "Your Grace," meaning to imply his goodness or clemency. It is now used as a term of honour in addressing Archbishops or Dukes. This long chat, all about one word, has kept us longer than I thought it would, and we shall not now have time to enter upon another subject before we go to church ; but as we have still a few minutes to spare, I should like you to read to me some beautiful lines on prayer, which you will find in this nice little book ; and I wish you to learn them to repeat in the evening. They were given to me in manuscript some time ago, but I never saw them in print till I found them here.*

* See "First Sundays at Church."

Caroline.—

“ LINES ON PRAYER.

- “ Go when the morning shineth,
Go when the noon is bright ;
Go when the eve declineth,
Go in the hush of night :
Go with pure mind and feeling,
Fling earthly thought away,
And in thy chamber kneeling,
Do thou in secret pray.
- “ Remember all who love thee,
All who are loved by thee ;
Pray, too, for those who hate thee,
If any such there be ;
Then for thyself, in meekness,
A blessing humbly claim,
And link with each petition
Thy great Redeemer's name.
- “ Or, if 'tis e'er denied thee
In solitude to pray,
Should holy thoughts come o'er thee,
When friends are round thy way,
Even then the silent breathing
Of thy spirit raised above,
Will reach His throne of glory,
Who is Mercy, Truth, and Love.

“ Oh ! not a joy or blessing
With this can we compare ;
The power that He hath given us,
To pour our souls in prayer !
Whene'er thou pinest in sadness,
Before His footstool fall ;
And remember, in thy gladness,
His grace, who gave thee all.”

DIALOGUE XXVII.



Mamma.—I think you will be able to tell me, my dear child, what part of the service follows next, without reading the Rubric.

Caroline.—Oh yes, mamma, the Litany on Sundays ; but when the Litany is *not* read, then the prayers for the “ Queen,” and for the “ Royal Family,” and for the “ Clergy and People,” are read ; but we had better, I think, read the Litany now, because those prayers will come again in the evening service, and so we shall read them in time.

Mamma.—I quite agree with you, my dear little girl : let us therefore turn to the Litany, or general supplication, as it is termed in the Rubric. By a general

supplication, it is meant that all the people present should join in it; and as I have remarked before, what a different service would it be, how much more impressive, how much more affecting, if all the people *did* join as they ought to do, with their *voices*, we must *hope* they do join in heart, however silently. Hear the beautiful, the magnificent description given by St. John, of the “voice of a great multitude,” and then compare it with what we too frequently hear, the solitary voice of the clerk giving the response, and you will join with me, I am sure, in lamenting that the Litany is not *audibly* made, what it is intended to be, the joint request of the whole congregation, “beseeching earnestly,” as the name implies, the mercy and protection of the Almighty. St. John says in the Revelations, “And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both

small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.”* The time is not yet come when “all the servants” of the Lord, “both small and great,” can join in this universal shout of praise. *Now* is the time for *Litanies*, or supplications and earnest prayers, for his mercy and favour.

“Praise is the task† of saints on high,
But prayer, of sinners here.”

And surely “both small and great” ought to unite in this most beautiful form of prayer, of which Comber says, “That it hath resemblance of most of the ancient forms, but is not the same

* Rev. xix. 5, 6.

† I do not feel that I have any right to alter a quotation, or I would have inserted another word for *task*, which is scarcely appropriate to the glorious privilege of praising God.

with any one, having so extracted the marrow of them all, that we may justly esteem it to be the best in this kind that ever was." The Litany consists of four parts ;—the invocation, the deprecations, the intercessions, and the conclusion. The word invocation here, means calling upon God. How do we address him in the Litany ?

Caroline.—First, as " God the Father, of Heaven ;" secondly, as " God the Son, Redeemer of the world ;" thirdly, as " God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son ;" and, lastly, as " the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God."

Mamma.—It is scarcely necessary, my dear child, to look for texts from Scripture to prove to us that we are commanded to call upon " God the Father," they are so numerous ; and it is sufficient for us, that our Saviour himself taught us to pray to him as " our Father in Heaven :" but, as there are unhappily

persons in the world who deny that the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is to be worshipped as God, it is better that we should look for a few texts in which we are plainly commanded to do so. Our Saviour himself tells us, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."* St. John says, "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father."† Now there can be no doubt as to what our *Lord meant* by thus commanding that "He should be honoured *even as* the Father is honoured," because the Jews who were present "sought," we are told, "to kill him," because he had made himself "*equal with God*;" and upon another occasion, "they took up stones again to stone him," because he said plainly unto them, "I and my Father are one."‡ Now if our Saviour had been a *good man*, as

* John v. 23.

† 1 John ii. 23.

‡ John x. 30, 31.

these same persons who deny that he is to be worshipped “*as God*” acknowledge—nay, they even admit that he was sent by God to be an example to us of holiness—how could he have thus proved himself to be “*a liar*” and a “*blasphemer?*” for it would certainly have been, what the Jews accused him of, blasphemy, to make himself “*equal with God,*” and to command men to honour him, even as they honoured the Father, had he been only a “*good man :*” for God had not only from Mount Sinai, but in his holy Word, declared, “*I am the Lord ; that is my name ; and my glory will I not give to another.*”^{*} We, therefore, in this Litany are only performing the commands of our Lord himself, in thus supplicating his mercy upon us “*miserable sinners,*” as *God the Son,* the Redeemer of the world. We will only look for one text to prove that the Holy Ghost is God ; as that will be suffi-

^{*} Isaiah xlii. 8.

cient, when we also remember, that our Lord commanded his Apostles to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It is in that awful chapter, where Ananias and his wife were struck dead for “lying to the Holy Ghost;”* which Peter tells them was “lying to God.” I am not going, my dear little girl, to attempt to explain to you how there are three Persons, yet only one God, here called upon and addressed as the “holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity.” It is sufficient for us that it is so “written” in the Word of God, from the very beginning of the Bible to the end. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are continually introduced, as *all* engaged in the work of man’s creation, redemption, and sanctification. And at the same time we are expressly told, that “the Lord our God is one Lord.”† It is confessedly “a mystery,”

* Acts v. 4 and 9.

† Mark xii. 29.

quite beyond our comprehension, as are many other things, which we see daily ; in short, as somebody or other, I forget now who, has said, “ If we were only to believe what we understand, we should believe but very little.” Therefore, though we cannot understand, let us humbly believe, and earnestly cry, “ O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God ; have mercy upon us, miserable sinners !” You cannot need now, my dear child, to be told that it is our duty to confess and bewail our “ manifold sins and wickedness,” and to entreat for mercy. Read, my love, the 9th chapter of Daniel, after we return from church ; and when you see how this holy man of old besought the mercy of the Lord, you will marvel that we should so *coldly*, with so much apparent indifference in our churches, allow this invocation to be said, as it too often is, by the clerk alone.

DIALOGUE XXVIII.

Mamma.—I told you, my love, that the Litany might be divided into four parts; the first part we considered last Sunday. What did I tell you the second part contained?

Caroline.—The deprecations, I think you said; but I do not know the meaning of the word.

Mamma.—A deprecation is a prayer against evil. This part of the service is addressed to our Lord and Saviour; he who “redeemed us with his precious blood;” we implore him to “remember not our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers.” Do you think you can tell me why we pray that God will not only

forgive our own sins, but also the sins of our forefathers ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma ; I think it is because he has said, he will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children.

Mamma.—You are right, my love ; it is for this reason that we pray that God will not “ remember ” the offences of our forefathers. There are many places in the Scriptures, in which we find that, because the Lord is “ long-suffering and gracious,” he delays his judgments, hoping that the children will turn to him, and implore him to forgive the sins of their fathers ; for he has plainly declared by his Prophet Ezekiel, that “ the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father,”* if he does that which is lawful and right ; and that he has “ no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.” Hear how mercifully, how tenderly, he addresses the house of Israel,—“ Repent, and turn yourselves from all your trans-

* Ezekiel xviii. 20.

gressions ; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed ; and make you a new heart and a new spirit : for why will ye die, O house of Israel ? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God : wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”* Do you not remember, also, our Lord’s tender lamentation over Jerusalem ? “ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! ”† It is when the children, instead of taking warning from the sins of their fathers, “ fill up the measure ” of their iniquity by doing the same sins, that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the “ present generation.” Remembering this, we therefore

* Ezekiel xviii. 30—32.

† Matt. xxiii. 37.

entreat the Lord to “ spare us,” not because we have not sinned as well as our fathers, but because he has redeemed us “ with his precious blood.” Almost every word of this verse is from the Scriptures ; and it is impossible, when uttering these words, “ Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people,” not to recall to our minds that beautiful chapter of the Prophet Joel—the second ; every word of it is beautiful ; but the passage I wish to draw your attention to just now is that beginning at the 12th verse. Read it, my love.

Caroline.—“ Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning : and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God : for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a

blessing behind him ; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God ? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly : gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts : let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, *Spare thy people, O Lord*, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them : wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God ? ”

Mamma.—The remaining verses assure us, that when the people thus supplicate, the Lord will “pity,” and “will answer” them ; and that even when the “great and terrible day of the Lord shall come, whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord *shall be delivered.*” With these

precious promises, then, before us, surely we shall not fail to join in the petition, “Spare us, good Lord!” Having thus implored the Lord to spare us, what do we entreat him to deliver us from?

Caroline.—From all evil and mischief. Oh, mamma! I know why we pray, then, to be delivered from *sin*,—because *that* is the greatest of all evils; and we pray to be delivered from the “crafts and assaults of the devil,” because we know that he would tempt us to sin, and bring upon us “wrath,” and everlasting misery.

Mamma.—You are perfectly right, my dear child, in your remark, that we are most properly taught in this Litany first to deprecate *sin*, as the *root* and *ground-work* of all the evils and miseries which are in the world, and it was by the “craft of the devil,” that it was brought into this now sad world, when he deceived by his falsehoods our first parents, and tempted Eve to taste of the forbidden

fruit, promising it would make her wise. The Word of God warns us that we must be “ watchful and vigilant ”* against this great “ adversary,” as he still goes about “ seeking whom he may devour ; ” but that if we “ resist ” him he will flee from us.”† We therefore ought earnestly to pray that God will be pleased to “ deliver us ” from the “ crafts and assaults of the devil,” so that he may neither “ entice us by his cunning, or terrify us by fear,” to commit such things as will bring upon us the wrath of God and eternal condemnation. What do we next entreat the Lord to deliver us from ?

Caroline.—From all blindness of heart, from pride, vain glory, and hypocrisy ; from envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness.

Mamma.—Oh, how earnestly, my dear child, ought we to join in this petition, more especially entreating to be kept

* 1 Peter v. 8.

† James iv. 7.

from all “blindness of heart,” which is the very worst kind of blindness, and the cause of our being led into any of the sins which follow ; for surely they are all so hateful in themselves, that no one would willingly yield themselves up to such vile passions were they not blind to their own faults. What does St. Paul tell us is the reason why so many walk in the “vanity of their mind?”* It is that their “understandings are darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts.” Was it not blindness of the heart that led the Pharisees to reject the Lord Jesus, as he himself tells them, “because they trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.” They became “blind” to their own sinfulness, and helplessness, and need of a Saviour, and would not come unto Him that he might heal them. Blindness of

* Eph. iv. 18.

heart leads people to call “evil good, and good evil;” * and Isaiah pronounces, “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, and put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.” Such persons, blinded by Satan, whom St. Paul calls “the god of this world,” † commend “pride” and “glory;” they love the praises of men, and covet or desire such things which lead to *vain* glory: they are ambitious of worldly honours and distinctions, instead of being humbled, as they ought to be, at their own utter insignificance, and giving to God *alone* the praise and the glory, for having enabled them to do anything deserving of praise: but as it is getting now too late to enter upon the remaining subjects, those hateful qualities here enumerated as springing from “blindness of heart,” let me hear you repeat those two admirable little poems,

* Isaiah v. 20, 21.

† 2 Cor. iv. 4.

which so well describe the way to find out pride, and the way to cure pride.*

Caroline.—

“ THE WAY TO FIND OUT PRIDE.

“ Pride, ugly Pride, is sometimes seen
By haughty looks, and lofty mien :
But oft’ner it is found that Pride
Loves deep within the heart to hide ;
And while the looks are mild and fair,
In secret works its mischief there.

“ Now if you really wish to find
If Pride be lurking in your mind,
Inquire if you can bear a slight,
Or patiently give up your right ?
Can you submissively consent
To take reproof and punishment,
And feel no angry temper start
In any corner of your heart ?
Can you at once confess a crime,
And promise for another time ;
Or say you’ve been in a mistake,
Nor try some poor excuse to make,
But freely own that it was wrong
To argue for your side so long ?

* From “ Hymns for Infant Minds.”

Flat contradiction can you bear
When you are right, and know you are ?
Nor flatly contradict again,
But wait, or modestly explain,
And tell your reasons one by one ;
Nor think of triumph when you've done ?
Can you, in business or in play,
Give up your wishes or your way ?
Or do a thing against your will,
For somebody that's younger still ?
And never try to overbear,
Nor say a word that is not fair ?
Does laughing at you in a joke,
No anger nor revenge provoke ?
But can you laugh yourself, and be
As merry as the company ?
Or, when you find that you could do
The harm to them they did to you,
Can you keep down the wicked thought,
And do exactly as you ought ?

“ Put all these questions to your heart,
And make it act an honest part ;
And, when they've each been fairly tried,
I think you'll own that you have Pride.
Some one will suit you, as you go,
And force your heart to tell you so :
But if they all should be denied,
Then you're too proud to own your Pride.”

“ THE WAY TO CURE PRIDE.

- “ Now I suppose, that, having tried
And found the secret of your pride,
You wish to drive it from your heart,
And learn to act a humbler part.
Well, are you sorry and sincere?
I'll try to help you, then, my dear.
- “ And first, the best and surest way,
Is to kneel down at once and pray :
The lowly Saviour will attend,
And strengthen you, and be your friend.
Tell him the mischief that you find
For ever working in your mind ;
And beg his pardon for the past,
And strength to overcome at last.
But then you must not go your way,
And think it quite enough to pray :
That is but doing half your task,
For you must *watch* as well as *ask*.
You pray for strength, and that is right,
But then it must be strength to fight :
For where's the use of being strong,
Unless you conquer what is wrong ?
Then look within :—ask every thought
If it be humble as it ought ?
Put out the smallest spark of Pride
The very moment 'tis descried ;

And do not stay to think it o'er,
For, while you wait, it blazes more.
If it should take you by surprise,
And beg you just to let it rise,
And promise not to keep you long,
Say, '*No ! the smallest* Pride is wrong !'
And when there's something so amiss,
That Pride says, 'Take offence at *this*,'
Then if you feel at all inclined
To brood upon it in your mind,
And think revengeful thoughts within,
And wish it were not wrong to sin ;
Oh, stop at once ! for if you dare
To wish for sin, that sin is there !
'Twill then be best to go and pray
That God would take your Pride away ;
Or if just then you cannot go,
Pray in your thoughts, and God will know ;
And beg his mercy, to impart
That best of gifts—a humble heart !
Remember, too, that you must pray,
And watch, and labour *every* day ;
Nor think it wearisome and hard
To be *for ever* on your guard.
No ; every morning must begin
With resolutions not to sin ;
And every evening recollect
How much you've failed in this respect :

Ask, whether such a guilty heart
Should act a proud or humble part?
Or, as the Saviour was so mild,
Inquire if Pride becomes a child:
And when all other means are tried,
Be humble that you've so much Pride."

DIALOGUE XXIX.

Mamma.—It can hardly be necessary, my dear little girl, that we should continue to discuss as fully as we have begun, each separate verse and deprecation in the Litany. You will see how detestable a sin hypocrisy is, and (however it may impose upon man), how vain it must be to attempt to deceive the all-seeing God, by our Saviour's address to his disciples, concerning the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, in the 12th chapter of St. Luke. Read also the 23d chapter of St. Matthew attentively, and you will find a minute description of this awful proof of "blindness of heart," in the character our Lord there gives of the Scribes and Pharisees. Read also

the beautiful and comprehensive description of charity, given by St. Paul, in the 13th chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians ; indeed, I hope you will learn it by heart, and you will then see how contrary to that spirit of love, which every Christian should earnestly endeavour to attain unto, it would be, to cherish the evil tempers of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness. We next entreat the Lord to deliver us from all kinds of sin, the end of which is death, and to preserve us from those evils which are more especially hurtful to the body, and which the Almighty sends as judgments upon a land, for the “ wickedness of them that dwell therein.” We are taught by the beautiful prayer of Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, that, when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the land, all the people should, by “ prayer and supplications,” entreat the Lord to “ hear and to forgive ;” and in such times of dread we

find men ready to “cry unto the Lord :” but here, in the Litany, we beseech the Almighty to deliver us altogether from these evils,—storms and tempests, pestilence, famine, and war ; and not only from foreign enemies, but also from evil men at home, who would, by “privy conspiracies,” which mean, secret plots, or by open rebellion, bring misery, death, and ruin into their own country. If we did not know from history that such dreadful things have been,—brothers taking up arms against brothers, and sons against fathers, even in our own land ; and very recently in other countries, especially France and Spain ; we could hardly believe it possible, that nations calling themselves Christian, and men professing to love their country, could be guilty of such enormities ; but, alas ! we know that such things have been, and therefore ought earnestly to say, “From all sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion ; from all false

doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and commandment, Good Lord deliver us.”

Caroline.—Mamma, I do not quite understand what false doctrine, heresy, and schism, mean.

Mamma.—Our Saviour himself tells us, that “many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many;” * and he bids his disciples “beware of them.” And we read in the various Epistles of the beloved John, and Peter, and Paul, and Jude, that even in the days of the Apostles themselves, “many deceivers had entered into the world.” † But St. Paul especially warns us, that in the “*latter times*, ‡ some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits,” “that in the *last days* perilous times shall come,” § in which “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, de-

* Matt. xxiv. 11.

† 2 John vii. 1.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 1.

§ 2 Tim. iii. 1.

ceiving, and being deceived;" and amongst those most likely to be led astray by them, are named "silly women." St. Peter tells us there shall be "false teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them;"* and that "many shall follow their pernicious ways." Being thus warned, we should indeed be to blame, my dear child, if we did not earnestly and constantly pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth, and "stablish, strengthen, and settle us" in the same; that we may not be like children "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."† It is the more necessary, too, that we should earnestly join in this petition, because Satan, who, as St. Paul tells us, can transform himself "into an angel of light,"‡ has been very

* 2 Peter ii. 1. † Eph. iv. 14. ‡ 2 Cor. xi. 14.

busy lately, persuading many that it is quite inconsistent with that universal love and charity which the Bible teaches should be felt by Christians towards “all men,” to condemn others for their opinions. “Do they not,” it is asked, “*also* say the Scriptures are *their* guide? *they* think *they* are *right*,” and how do we *know* they are not?” and those who “earnestly contend for their own faith,” are called “uncharitable,” “Pharisees,” “zealots,” and “bigots,”—hard words, of which you do not, I dare say, know the meaning.

Caroline.—I know what it means to call a person “uncharitable,” or a “Pharisee.” It means, that they think themselves wiser and holier than others; but I do not understand what a “zealot” or a “bigot” is.

Mamma.—If we consider the *real* meaning of the word zealot, it ought rather to be used as a term of praise, for it signifies a person who is very earnest,

very anxious, very ardent, in the pursuit of an object ; and, as St. Paul tells us, “ It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.”* One would suppose, that to be called a zealot in the cause of religion, would be an honourable distinction ; but it is *not* so used by the world, but generally conveys the idea of a person obstinately determined to persevere in forwarding his own cause, or his own opinions, whether they are right or wrong ; and this is the meaning of the term bigot. Let us, then, diligently seek for what is said in the Word of God on this subject ; and first we will turn to St. John, because no one of the apostles so frequently urges the doctrines of love and charity, so that he is frequently called the Apostle of love ; and we are told that, “ when he was very old, and unable to say much in Christian assemblies, ‘ Children, love one another,’ was his repeated

* Gal. iv. 18.

sermon. And being asked why he told them only one thing, he answered, that nothing else was needed." And yet let us turn to his Epistles, and mark, What does *he* say?—"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him *not* into your house, *neither bid him God speed*: for he that *biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*"* What says St. Paul?—"But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be

* 2 John 7, 9—11.

accursed.”* And in another place he says, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences *contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.*”† With these repeated warnings in the Word of God before them, rightly did the compilers of our Liturgy teach us earnestly to pray, “From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and commandment, Good Lord, deliver us!” And it appears to me that they meant, by connecting hardness of heart and contempt of God’s Word with false doctrine, heresy, and schism, to show that the one must either proceed from, or lead to, the other; for what are “false doctrines,” and how can they be proved to be false, except they teach what is contrary to the Word of God? and those who obstinately and perversely continue to spread such doctrines, when convinced

* Gal i. 7, 8.

† Rom. xvi. 17.

in their own minds that they are *not* the doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures, must be guilty of the crime of heresy ; and such we are, you see, commanded to “*avoid.*” We may, with perfect Christian love and charity, pray for them, that they may be led to see their errors, and believe the “truth as it is in Jesus,” without having *any fellowship or communion* with them. And, indeed, I could find you many more texts to prove this, but you must now be tired ; I will therefore endeavour to explain shortly, the meaning of the word schism, and prove by one or two texts, that *this* is also condemned in the Word of God ; and we will then get ready for church. The meaning of the word schism, is a separation or division in the church—a division among those who all call themselves Christians and brethren, and believe, perhaps, all the same doctrines which are necessary to their salvation, yet separate from each

other, and dispute with each other, about some, perhaps, trifling form. Alas ! that so it should be. And that *this is wrong*, St. Paul tells us in his Epistle to the Corinthians—turn to the 1st chapter of the First Epistle, and read how earnestly he addresses them,—“ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.” And he proceeds to censure them for their “ contentions,” one saying, “ I am of Paul ;” others, “ and I of Apollos ; and I of Cephas ; and I of Christ.”

Caroline.—But, dear mamma, if there were contentions among those who were converted by the Apostles themselves, do you think that people now would be as much to blame as *they* were ?

Mamma.—Yes, my dear child, because *we* have the benefit of the warnings and

instructions given to them. Speaking of the conduct of the Israelites in the Old Testament, St. Paul says, “ Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come : wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”* The same temptations are common to all men ; the nature of man is the same in all ages, and all are prone to fall into the same errors that others have committed. St. Paul knew this, and his rebuke of the dissensions of the Corinthians was written for “ our admonition.” We ought to be most thankful to God that we are members of a Church which teaches us, that “ whatsoever is not read in the Holy Scriptures, nor may be proved thereby, is not required to be believed of any as an article of faith.”† It is our duty, therefore, to compare the Liturgy and the Articles of our Church

* 1 Cor. x. 11, 12.

† Sixth Article.

with the Word of God ; and having proved that they “teach no other doctrine,” but are “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone,” let us follow the directions so frequently given us in the same Holy Scriptures, to “avoid” all those who would endeavour in any way, either by their words or their writings, to shake our faith in its holy doctrines, or make us discontented with its forms or discipline. We should never dispute with them, or argue with them, for we are commanded “not to strive about words to no profit but to the subverting of the hearers,” and to “avoid” questions that “do gender strife.”*

* 2 Tim. ii. 23.

DIALOGUE XXX.

Mamma.—The two verses which we have now to read, my dear child, and take for the subject of our thoughts this morning, have always appeared to me particularly affecting. We plead not *our* love or *our* gratitude for all the former mercies of the Lord, but *His* great *love* and compassion towards us. Lord, thou hast done all this for us ; thou hast vouchsafed to come down into this sad world to redeem us ; thou hast taken upon thee our nature, which is here expressed “ by the mystery of thy holy incarnation ; ” and as St. Paul tells us, “ without controversy *great* is the *mystery* ”* that God should even become a

* 1 Tim. iii. 16.

poor, little, helpless infant, and submit for our sakes to fulfil all the ordinances of religion, and to suffer hunger, to be tempted of Satan, to go through all the agony of a painful and disgraceful death, and all for us, guilty miserable sinners as we are : but he *has* done it, and we therefore go unto him, recalling all he has already done for us, “ by thy holy nativity and circumcision, by thy baptism, fasting, and temptation, by thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, we beseech thee to deliver us ! ” It was thus the saints of old used to plead before him, “ Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies, and thy loving kindnesses, for they have been ever of old.”* Moses pleads his promises “ to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; ” † and Isaiah uses the same language, “ I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord,

* Psalm xxv. 6.

† Exod. xxxii. 13.

and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord *hath bestowed on us*, and the *great goodness* toward the house of Israel, which he *hath bestowed on them* according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses.” *

Caroline.—Mamma, I do not think I quite understand the meaning of the word passion. When we use it we generally mean violent anger, and I know it cannot mean *that*.

Mamma.—The word may be applied to any violent emotion of the mind, whether anger, or zeal, or love; but it is more particularly used to express the extreme mental sufferings, the agony of mind endured by the meek and holy Redeemer; for surely “there never was any sorrow like unto his sorrow.” †

Caroline.—Thank you, mamma: we may now go on to the next verse. “In all time of our tribulation, in all time of

* Isaiah lxiii. 7.

† Lam. i. 12.

our wealth ; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, Good Lord, deliver us ! ”

Mamma.—You can scarcely need any explanation of this verse. We must feel that in each of these trials we need the support of the Almighty, though perhaps there may be some who would smile at the idea of wealth being considered as a trial ; and yet how many instances may we bring from the Word of God to prove that “ the time of wealth ” is even yet more to be feared than the time of sorrow. “ It is better,” says Solomon, “ to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting ; ”* and though our Lord himself has told us that there are *some* who, when “ persecution or tribulation ariseth, fall away,”† still we know that “ tribulation,” and “ sorrows,” and “ chastenings,” are the appointed lot of his most favoured children. It is by these very trials they

* Ecclesiastes vii. 2.

† Matt. xiii. 21.

are purified like gold in the fire ; and “ through *much tribulation*” * they must enter the kingdom of heaven ; while the same gracious Lord, though he adds that “ all things are possible with God,” warns us “ how hard it is for the rich to enter therein.” † Well, then, has our Church added, “ In all time of our wealth,” as well as “ in all time of our tribulation, Good Lord deliver us !” While we are speaking of this part of the Litany, I will show you some very beautiful lines, that your sweet young friend Annie has copied out for me. I do not know by whom they are written, or from whence she copied them ; but I think them very beautiful, and well worth your learning them by heart.

“ In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth ; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment,

“ Good Lord, deliver us ! ”

* John xvi. 33 ; Acts. xiv. 22.

† Mark x. 23—25.

“ PARAPHRASE.

“ Thou, who only canst deliver,
Of all grace and good the Giver ;
Worn and weary, unto thee,
Low we bow the humble knee :
In sickness, poverty, and woe,
To their tombs when dear ones go ;
In temptation’s fiery hour,
When fade the garlands from our bower ;
In the spirit’s sore vexation,
In *all* times of tribulation,

Gracious Lord, deliver !

“ When the joyous spirit boundeth,
When the voice of mirth resoundeth ;
Rich in friends, in hope, in health,
Rich in stores of treasured wealth :
When the sky is bright above us,
When we kneel with those who love us ;
When earth is somewhat heaven resembling,
Teach us to “ rejoice with trembling : ”
Of the tempter’s hidden snare,
Bid thy servants *then* beware,—

Gracious Lord, deliver !

“ When the hour of death is nigh,
Short the breath and dim the eye ;
Come it in what form it may,
Saviour ! take the sting away :

Whether swift it bears us hence,
On the wing of pestilence ;
Or, slowly wasting day by day,
We pass, like wreath of snow, away :
Be it sword, or flame, or wave,
Almighty ! thou art strong to save :
Gracious Lord, deliver !

“ When the heavens together roll,
Shrivelling like a parched scroll,
And echoes round from shore to shore,
The sentence—‘ Time shall be no more ! ’
When the great white throne is set,
And the tribes of earth are met ;
When in men and angels’ sight,
On the *left hand* or the right ;
In that awful judgment-day,
Saviour, hear us *then*, we pray :
Gracious Lord, deliver ! ”

DIALOGUE XXXI.

Mamma.—We now come to another change in the Litany, my love. We have implored the Almighty to deliver us, under all the calamities that may befall ourselves ; we now beseech him to hear us, on behalf of others. Do you remember in what part of the Scriptures we are commanded thus to intercede ?

Caroline.—No, mamma.

Mamma.—Look for St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, and turn to the second chapter. This Epistle was written to Timothy to instruct him in his duty as the head of the Church at Ephesus. What, therefore, St. Paul commanded him to observe, ought without doubt to be followed by all ministers of the

Gospel, with gratitude that such directions have been given them. Read what he says.

Caroline.—“ I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour ; who will have *all* men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” *

Mamma.—In obedience therefore to this command, we beseech the Almighty to hear us, and that it will please Him to rule and govern the holy Church universal in the right way. You know what is meant, my dear child, by this term, do you not ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma ; it means, Christians throughout the whole world.

• 1 Tim. ii. 1—4.

Mamma.—We next pray for our Sovereign ; and surely every one must from their hearts repeat this prayer, when we remember that all the multiplied cares that *must* fall to the lot of the ruler of a great nation, the deep anxieties and awful responsibility attached to such an office, are all now laid upon one so young as our beloved Queen. We need not fear, however, either for her or her people, if her heart be “ruled in the faith, fear, and love of God ;” if her affiance, or *trust*, is in Him alone, and she seeks only His honour and glory ; and if he be pleased to be her defender and keeper, giving her the victory over all, especially her spiritual enemies. Therefore let us earnestly repeat, after these petitions, “We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.” But we are commanded to pray, not for our Sovereign *only*, but also for all that are placed in any offices of authority ; and next we entreat the Lord to “illuminate” all

bishops, priests, and deacons, with “true knowledge” and “understanding of His Word.” And oh! how earnest ought we to be in offering up these petitions! “For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge,” says the Lord, by the mouth of his prophet, Malachi, “and the people should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.”* We know to “how weighty an office and charge they are called,” “to teach, to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord’s family, to seek for Christ’s sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever.”† It would take us too long a time now, my dear child, to look for all the various texts which prove of how great importance it is these holy offices should be filled by men of truly apostolic minds, worthy to be

* Malachi ii. 7.

† See the Office for the Ordering of Priests.

“the light of the world ;” for all those who are appointed to be the ministers of his Gospel, and whose office it is to teach others, are called upon to follow the example of the Apostles in all things ; yet as they cannot do so, unless God be pleased to “illuminate,” or enlighten them with his Holy Spirit, we ought earnestly to pray that this Spirit may be poured upon them, that they may be filled with “true knowledge,” and rightly understand the Word of God ; so that they may, both by their preaching and their holy lives, show forth the power of the Gospel. Then follow intercessions for the lords of the council, the nobility, and magistrates. Look for the 8th chapter of Proverbs, and you will see how important it is thus to pray for our rulers.

Caroline.—I have found it, mamma, and I think I know which are the verses you mean me to read. Am I not to begin at the 14th ?

Mamma.—Yes, my love, and read that and the two following verses.

Caroline.—“Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By *me* kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.”

Mamma.—We see from this, my dear child, that it is from the Lord alone, that kings, or princes, or rulers, *can* have understanding to rule well or decree “just judgment.”* Surely, then, we ought earnestly to pray that it may please Him to endue them with “grace, wisdom, and understanding,” when we remember of what importance it is to a nation that those who are elevated above others, either by rank or station, should set an example of holiness. “A city that is set on a hill,” said our Saviour, “cannot be hid.”† And though this was said, not to one class only, but to

* Deut. xvi. 18.

† Matt. v. 14.

all his followers, who are each called upon in their own peculiar station, to let their light shine before men, still we cannot but perceive that it is more particularly applicable to those, who from being elevated by rank or station above others, like the city set on a hill, cannot be hid: besides, they may be compared to that servant who received from his Lord the ten talents; their rank, their wealth, their influence, are so many talents committed to their trust; and truly indeed may it be said of them—

“ They are indeed the stewards of heaven.”

And that

“ From those, to whom so much is given,
How much may be demanded.” *

Caroline.—The next petition, dear mamma, seems to follow just as it ought to do: after praying for those in authority, we entreat God “ to bless and keep *all* his people.”

* Milne’s “ Poems of many Years.”

Mamma.—Yes, my dear child, we are commanded so to do by St. Paul, who exhorts that “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for *all* men ;”* and if the blessing of God be not upon us, as *a nation*, as *a people*, it would be vain to suppose that the rulers could be prosperous. The glory of a king should be the happiness and prosperity of his people ; but I think *this* petition may be considered as including even more than our *own* people, and extending to all our brethren of mankind, especially as it is followed by the prayer, “That it may please thee to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord.” Volumes might be filled with details of the miseries of war, yet no description, however eloquently written, could convey to the minds of those who have never witnessed them, all the horrors, the wretchedness and crimes that accompany this most fruitful of all the

* 1 Tim. ii. 1.

sources of misery with which the enemy of souls has desolated mankind. Earnestly then, indeed, should we utter this petition, earnestly should we pray for that happy time, “when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” *

* Isa. ii. 4.

DIALOGUE XXXII.

Mamma.—I have been so much pleased with the remarks which I have been reading in that nice old book,* which you were so much amused to hear the author termed “a little book,” upon the verses which we are this morning to make the subject of our thoughts and conversation, that I do not think I can do better than read them to you. He says, “It is now time to look inward, and consider what is wanting for our own souls, and the souls of others, because, though temporal peace be a great, yet it is a finite blessing.” Do you know the meaning of the word finite?

* Comber’s “Companion to the Temple.”

Caroline.—No, Mamma.

Mamma.—It means, literally, a thing which will come to an end—which is limited, or bounded. Comber says, “Peace, though it is a great, yet it is a finite blessing ;” that is, it *may* soon be ended ; he adds, it “can last no longer, at the utmost, than to the end of an uncertain life ; but we ourselves shall endure for ever : so that we had need provide something that will continue, and be a blessing when this life shall end. Now, St. Paul assures us that charity and the love of God shall never fail.* And David informs us, that the fear of the Lord endureth for ever.† The Prophet Isaiah also, that the effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance for ever.”‡ But we will now leave the “*little book*,” and seek for *ourselves* the texts from the book of God. We know that in the Scriptures,

* 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

† Psalm xix. 9.

‡ Isaiah xxxii. 17.

the *heart* is spoken of as the source of all our affections, feelings, and desires, “whether good or evil.” “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”* Out of the heart, our Saviour tells us, proceed also, “evil thoughts,” as well as good thoughts. “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.”† Now, my dear child, can we of our own power make our hearts good?

Caroline.—Oh, no, mamma! we cannot even think a good thought without God puts it into our hearts; and if he were to take his Holy Spirit from us, we should be like the wicked people before the flood, “every imagination of the thoughts of our hearts would be only evil continually.”‡ But he has *promised*,

* Prov. iv. 23.

† Luke vi. 45.

‡ Gen. vi. 5.

mamma, that he will give his people “new hearts,” and put “his Spirit within them.” Shall I look for the texts?

Mamma.—Yes, my love, you may; but these promises are so numerous, that it would keep us too long just now to find them all. It will be sufficient, perhaps, to find that given in the 36th chapter of Ezekiel. Read it, my love.

Caroline.—I have found it, mamma, it is in the 26th and 27th verses. “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”

Mamma.—Now let us consider all we have been saying, and apply it to the petition in the Litany we are now considering. We cannot, we find, think or

do any good thing from the suggestions of our *own hearts*; yet the Almighty says, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine *heart*, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine *heart*.”* We therefore, in this petition, plead his promises, and intreat him *to give us* an heart to love and fear him; and if we love and fear him, what must naturally follow?—“that we diligently live after his commandments.” “If ye love me,” says our Saviour, “keep my commandments.” “For this is the love of God,” says St. John, “that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.”† No, indeed, they “are not grievous;” but, on the contrary, if we and all around us, did always, and in all things, “diligently live after his commandments,” even this world would be a scene of love, and peace, and joy.

* Deut. vi. 5, 6.

† 1 John v. 3.

But let us now proceed to the next petition. The Apostles continually remind us, that we must “grow in grace,”* that our “love should abound yet more and more,”† “being fruitful in every good work, and *increasing* in the knowledge of God.”‡ The life of the Christian is compared to a race, in which those who wish to gain the prize must press forward, “forgetting,” as St. Paul says, “those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before.”§ We must not rest satisfied with our attainments, or imagine even for a moment that we are “already perfect;” but we must go on, seeking by every means in our power, so to improve in all holiness and godliness, that our “profiting may appear to all,”|| and “all the fruits of the Spirit may be

* 2 Pet. iii. 18.

† Phil. i. 9.

‡ Col. i. 10.

§ Phil. iii. 12—14.

|| 1 Tim. iv. 15.

manifest in our lives.” What are these fruits of the Spirit, my dear child ?

Caroline.—I will find the text, mamma. It is in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians. I have found it,—“ The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ; against such there is no law.” *

Mamma.—That is indeed, my dear child, a beautiful and comprehensive text ; but there are many others also. In the 5th chapter of Ephesians, “ the fruit of the Spirit,” we are told, “ is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth ;” † but we need not dwell longer upon this subject. One of those means by which we may hope to “ grow in grace,” is hearing the Word of God. What does St. James say ?

Caroline.—“ And receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” ‡

* Gal. v. 22, 23. † Eph. v. 9. ‡ James i. 21.

Mamma.—You see, then, how this petition in the Litany agrees with the injunctions of the Apostles. We have been praying to God to give us a heart to love him. We now go on to beg him “to give to all his people increase of grace, to hear meekly his word, and that they may receive it with pure affection, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.” But we must now go and get ready for church.

DIALOGUE XXXIII.

Mamma.—Let us thank God, my dear child, that we are again permitted to continue our pleasant task. The petition which next follows will not require that we should dwell upon it. We know that the “way of truth” is to be found in God’s Word, and we pray that he will be pleased to restore all those who have wandered from it, or who have allowed themselves to be “deceived,” by listening to those “evil seducers,” against whom both St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John so earnestly warn their followers. We next entreat him that it will please him to “strengthen such as do stand.” “In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst

me with strength in my soul," * says David; and it is only when thus strengthened by Almighty help, that we are enabled to "*stand* fast in the faith," † and to resist the "wiles of the devil." But we also pray for the "weak-hearted," that they may be helped and comforted. And what a number of beautiful promises may we call to mind to strengthen our faith, when we make this request, and make us *feel sure* that it will be granted. Let us look for a few. Turn to the 35th chapter of Isaiah, the 3d and 4th verses.

Caroline.—I have found it, mamma,—
"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense: he will come and save you." I am not quite sure, mamma, that I quite understand what is meant by "your

* Psalm cxxxviii. 3. † 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

God shall come with vengeance, even God with a recompense.”

Mamma.—You are right, my dear child, in wishing to understand what you read ; but when the *general* meaning of a passage is perfectly plain, it is not right to encourage a critical spirit, or to be anxious about the precise meaning of *every* word. When a text does not appear quite clear, it is a good plan to refer to those parts of Scripture in which similar expressions occur, and one verse will thus be found frequently to interpret another. There are a great many similar passages to that you have just read ; some evidently refer to that period when our Lord shall come again to judge the world, and take “vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* But at present we have referred to this verse, and there are many others in the Bible, too many for us now to look for them

* 2 Thess. i. 8.

all, to prove that the Lord has promised to “comfort and help the weak-hearted.” “Fear not,” he says, “I will save you ;” “be not dismayed, for I am your God.”* If your trials proceed from the oppressions of wicked men, however powerful they may be, “fear them not ;” trust your cause to the Almighty ; he will “recompense” them : “vengeance” is *His*. *This is the meaning of that verse you said you did not quite understand ; and should your heart fail you, because of your spiritual adversaries, fear not.* “Come unto me,” he says, “all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest ;”† “the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”‡ Thus, pitying our infirmities, and remembering that we are but dust,§ he will “not break the bruised reed,”|| because he is “God and not

* Isaiah xli. 10.

† Matt. xi. 28.

‡ Rom. xvi. 20.

§ Psalm ciii. 13, 14.

|| Isaiah xlii. 3.

man ;”* but how angry should *we* be with any one of our fellow-creatures who should doubt *our* promises ? how weary should we be of conferring benefits upon those, who instead of cheerfully using the means we placed at their disposal with a view to assist them out of some difficulty, should only sit down and weep, and upbraid us, and say they were sure that after all we were going to leave them in their distress and do nothing for them ? and yet such is in reality the conduct of the fearful and weak-hearted. Let us therefore earnestly pray that our faith fail not ; but that in every trial we may be enabled, like St. Paul, to say, “ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed.”† You understand, my love, what is meant by “ raising up them that fall,” do you not ?

* Hosea xi. 9.

† 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

Caroline.—I think I do, mamma. Does it not mean to bring those to repentance who fall into sin ?

Mamma.—Yes, my love ; and we entreat “ finally,” that Satan may be beat down under our feet ; meaning that we may obtain a complete victory over this our great enemy : to trample a thing under our feet, being an expression frequently used in the Bible to denote entire subjection.* The next petition is so plain, that we need not stop to consider it. We beseech the Almighty to succour, help, and comfort all that are in danger, necessity, or tribulation ; but we shall find something to observe about the following petition ; and if we were to look out for all the texts connected with each of those sufferers for whom we pray, we should find much to interest us. You may observe, first, that all those for whom we are now praying, are most probably prevented themselves from attend-

* Joshua x. 24 ; Psalm cx. 1 ; Malachi iv. 3.

ing the public worship of God. Travel-
lers, those perhaps who are wandering
through strange lands, midst various
perils, to teach the knowledge of the
true God to the heathen, or those who
“go down to the sea in ships,”* and see
the wonders of the Lord on the deep;—
for these we pray, but not only for these,
because *apparently* exposed to greater
danger; we should, in *all* our “goings
out” and “comings in,” remember that
safety and preservation from evil acci-
dents is from God alone. Even the poor
heathen seek by charms, and offerings,
and various superstitious ceremonies, to
procure the favour of their idol gods,
before proceeding upon a journey; and
yet, I grieve to say it, I have read, even
very lately, scoffing remarks, made by
one professing to be a Christian, upon
the pious thanksgivings uttered by a
holy and religious man, for his preserva-
tion from danger during a journey from

* Psalm cvii. 23—30.

London to York,—as if our lives were even for one moment secure from danger without the especial providence of God. We pray, also, for those who are in danger, and are suffering pain on the bed of sickness; for young children—those too young to pray for themselves; and for those who are in prison, or in bonds. Do you not remember the beautiful and affecting incident of the angel delivering Peter out of prison, while “prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him?” *

Caroline.—Oh yes, mamma! and I always think it was so natural that the maid-servant should run back into the room to tell the people that Peter was safe, instead of opening the door for him.

Mamma.—Our dear Annie has again copied for us some beautiful lines upon this verse of the Litany, but like the former ones she gave us, she does not

* Acts xii. 5.

know who they are written by,—most probably they are both by the same person.

“ That it may please thee to preserve all that travel by land or by water, all women labouring of child, all sick persons, and young children, and to show thy pity upon all prisoners and captives—

“ We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord ! ”

“ When the oft-repeated sound
Through the aisle has echoed round,
And from the assembled train
Breaks the solemn prayer again—
We beseech thee, hear us, Lord !
Join not *thou*, with *faint* accord,
But *earnestly* and *humbly* kneel,
And *warmly* to thy God appeal
For those, the sick and far away,
Who kneel not with thee here to-day.

“ Pray thou for the traveller now,
With weary foot and burning brow :
Perchance upon a foreign strand,
Pining for his distant land,
In fancy, through his native dell,
Chimes the holy Sabbath bell ;
But, weary as he gazes round,
Far other sight and other sound

Break upon his eye and ear :
Pray—and joy that thou art *here*.

“ For the wanderer on the deep,
Starting from his broken sleep
At the tempest’s hollow sound,
Or the lightning flashing round,
Or the hostile cannon’s roar :
Pray *thou*, on thy quiet shore,
That the God of earth and sea,
Equally o’er him and thee,
May his guardian care extend,
And be the sea-worn wanderer’s friend.

“ Pray thou for her whose throbbing brow
And crimson cheek are burning now,
In her hour of agony ;
Pray thou, that her steadfast eye
May fix in Him, whose power alone
Can still that agonizing groan,
And bid her new-born infant’s wail
Speak its heart-consoling tale :
Pray *thou*—for *her* prayers to-day
In sighs of anguish died away.

“ Lift again thy earnest cry
For those in slow decline, who lie
On the couch, by friendship spread,
Or on fever’s restless bed ;

Never more, perchance, to come
Within the temple's holy dome :
They ask thy prayers—remember *thou*,
When health is beaming on thy brow,
The hour of pain and death is nigh,
And pray for them right fervently.

“ For the child, in summer hours,
Sporting 'mid the sunlit flowers,
Reckless, in its happy play,
Of the perils of the way ;
Lovely, but alas ! the while
Heir of sin, and woe, and guile,
And unable yet to raise
Its lisping voice in prayer or praise :
Wayward, frolicsome, and wild,
Pray *thou* for that helpless child.

“ And yet once more, in fancy, mark
The captive's dungeon, lone and dark ;
Days, months, and seasons, pass away,
And yet he comes not here to pray :
Ask not *thou* if crime or care
Have placed the lonely captive there.
He is bound, and *thou art free*,
And thy song of joy should be
Mingled with an earnest cry
For prisoners in their misery.”

DIALOGUE XXXIV.

Mamma.—That petition of the Litany which we are now going to consider, will not require any explanation, my dear child, for we must know that we are asking according to the will of God, and therefore that he “heareth us,”* when we pray, “That it may please thee to defend and provide for the fatherless children, and widows; and all that are desolate and oppressed;” for many are the promises in his holy Word that he will make them his especial care. “A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation,”† says the Psalmist. But we will look for one more text only out

* 1 John v. 14.

† Psalm lxxviii. 5.

of many that might be found. Look for the 49th chapter of Jeremiah and the eleventh verse.

Caroline.—I have found it, mamma, and will read it to you. “Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.”

Mamma.—Having, then, *these promises*, my dear child, we may with all confidence present *this* petition, feeling assured that all that are “desolate and oppressed,” will in him find a comforter and defender. The next petition does not require that we should dwell upon it. We have before seen that St. Paul “exhorts” that intercessions should be made for “all men;”* and we now intreat that it will please God to have “mercy upon all.” But we will dwell a little upon that petition which follows, in which we fulfil our Lord’s injunction of praying for our enemies. I need not remind you of his own holy example

* 1 Tim. ii. 1.

when even upon the cross, amidst mockeries and insults, he could yet say, “ Father, forgive them, they know not what they do ;” but I wish to point out to you, that unless we from our *hearts* can truly utter this Christian petition, and forgive, even as we wish to be forgiven, all our prayers are vain. Our Lord expressly tells us this, when he says, we are to be reconciled to our brother, if he has ought against us, before we offer our gift at the altar.

Caroline.—Yes, mamma ; but then that means, that if *we* have offended any one, we are to ask forgiveness of that person : but suppose the person will not be reconciled, but will still remain our enemy, and continues to say evil things of us, what then can we do ?

Mamma.—We can do no more than pray for them from our hearts, my dear child, and endeavour, whenever we may have it in our power, to return good for evil. Being “ reviled, we bless ; being

persecuted, we suffer it : being defamed, we intreat :” * says St. Paul, under provocations and sufferings more bitter than any *we* are likely to be called upon to endure. And again, in another place, he says, “ Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath : for it is written, Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” †

Caroline.—I do not think I quite understand what it means by “ heaping coals of fire upon his head.”

Mamma.—It evidently alludes to the melting of metals in the fire, thus softening, refining, and purifying them. I believe there have been persons so perverse as to mention this text as one

* 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. † Rom. xii. 19—21.

that inculcates the horrible doctrine that, by thus acting, you will increase the guilt of your adversary and heap more wrath upon him. Yet one could scarcely imagine such a perversion to be possible, when the words are followed *immediately* by the injunction, “Be not overcome of evil :” that is to say, do not allow the evil passions of revenge or anger to overcome your Christian love, but rather by your kindness, “overcome evil with good.” There are some pretty lines in Parnell’s “Hermit ;” a poem you will learn with pleasure, I have no doubt, when you are a little older :—

“The mean suspicious wretch, whose bolted door
Ne’er moved in pity to the wandering poor,
With him I left the cup, to teach his mind,
That Heaven can bless, if mortals will be kind :
Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
By heaping coals of fire upon its head ;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.”

And in framing this petition of the Litany, I should think those who composed it had the same verse from the Scriptures in their minds; for the petition is, not only that it may please the Almighty to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, but also that he will “*turn their hearts.*” We have a promise, too, that if we thus conform our wills to the commands of God, he *will* turn their hearts; for it is written, “When a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”* I think we shall find so much to talk about, so much to interest us, in the next petition, that we will delay the consideration of it till next Sunday.

* Prov. xvi. 7.

DIALOGUE XXXV.

Mamma.—I told you, my dear child, that we should find much to engage our thoughts, and that I should have much to say upon the next petition. Let us read it. What do we say ?

Caroline.—“ That it may please thee to give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them.”

Mamma.—We all require, my dear child, to be very watchful over our own hearts, lest we acquire a careless and indifferent, or still worse, a thankless manner, of receiving the common blessings of life, *because they are so common.* “ While the earth remaineth,” saith the Almighty, “ seedtime and harvest, and

cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”* And thus, as St. Paul reminded the poor ignorant idolaters of Lycaonia, it has ever been, God “left not himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness ;”† but seeing that “all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation,”‡ many, alas ! seem to consider it quite as a thing of course, a mere common and ordinary process of nature, that if they sow and plant, the harvest *must* follow ; forgetting, that it is by the mercy of God alone, that they are permitted to plant and sow, and that it is from his bountiful hand alone that the increase cometh. The compilers of the Liturgy would carefully guard us from falling into this error, for this petition of the

* Gen. viii. 22. † Acts xiv. 17.

‡ 2 Pet. iii. 4.

Litany not only acknowledges that God “gives,” but also that he must “*preserve*” to our use the kindly fruits of the earth; and doubtless, this petition being so continually offered up, in every church throughout our land, does bring down a blessing upon the nation, so that we seldom experience the great and grievous famines, which we read of in the Bible; still I cannot help wishing that our Church had appointed *one* day in the year for *especial prayers*, and earnest supplications, that God would be pleased to bless the labours of our hands, and that he would “cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth.”* When the harvest is gathered in, too, surely it would be better that there should be a day set apart for thanksgivings.

Caroline.—But, mamma, are there

* Psalm civ. 14.

not prayers in the Prayer-book, and thanksgivings too, that are to be read whenever the occasion requires it,—Prayers for Rain, and Thanksgivings for Rain; Prayers for fine Weather, and Thanksgivings for fine Weather?

Mamma.—Yes, my love, there are; but if you read them attentively, you will observe that they are applicable only to extreme cases. “When thy judgments are in the earth,” says the Prophet Isaiah, “the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness;”* and we generally find, that in times of famine or pestilence, or any very grievous calamity, the people are very ready to pray, and seek the Lord with supplications. When we come to this part of the service, I shall have many things to tell you which will interest you very much; but it was not to such *extreme* cases that I wished to draw your

* Isa. xxvi. 9.

attention now ; what I wish you *now* to observe is, that we are not either *nationally* or individually, as grateful as we ought to be for common and daily blessings ; we do not thank God as we *ought* to do for our “ daily bread ; ” we do not acquire a *habit* of *thankfulness* ; we do not cultivate a “ rejoicing spirit,” that sees love, and mercy, and joy, and beauty, in everything by which we are surrounded. The sun shines ; all inanimate nature rejoices ; the harvest is gathered in ; God opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing ;* the “ fruits of the earth *are* preserved to our use,” and yet no day is appointed for offering thanks ; and deeply as I reverence and admire *all* the services of our Church, I should like to see this addition made to them. “ Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works

* Psalm cxlv. 16.

to the children of men.”* “ For it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God : yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.”†

* Psalm cvii. 8.

† Psalm cxlvii. 1, in the Book of Common Prayer.

DIALOGUE XXXVI.

Mamma.—We have now come, my dear child, to the last petition in the Litany ; read it attentively, and you will see that it is one of the most perfect and comprehensive prayers that could ever be offered by sinful, weak, and erring creatures such as we are. We pray for *true* repentance, without which it would be vain to expect forgiveness of our sins ; and if we pray in faith, shall we not be heard ? Most certainly ; for we have this express promise,—“ Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to *give* repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”* But we pray, not only for for-

* Acts v. 31.

givenness of “all our sins, negligences, and ignorances,” but also that he will “endue us with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to his holy Word ;” for it is only by amending our lives that we can prove that our repentance is really sincere. Can you not remember some instances mentioned in the Bible, my dear child, in which repentance did not produce any real amendment of life, and therefore could not have been true repentance ?

Caroline. — Yes, mamma ; Pharaoh said he was sorry for having sinned, and he prayed Moses to intreat God to forgive him ;* but he only said so when he was frightened, for as soon as the plague was removed, he hardened his heart again. And even Judas is said to have “repented,” and to have returned the money he had received for betraying our Saviour ; yet *his* was not

* Exodus x. 16, 17.

true repentance, for he went and hanged himself.

Mamma.—You are quite right, my love : the instances you have given, and there are others also mentioned in the Bible, are not instances of *true* penitence which always leads to amendment of life. After having offered this beautiful supplication, with earnest entreaties we implore our great High Priest,* through whom alone we can come with boldness to the throne of grace, to hear us and to have mercy upon us. “Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us ! Oh, Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,—Grant us thy peace !” Who is it that calls our Saviour the Lamb of God ?

Caroline.—John the Baptist, mamma. When he saw Jesus coming to him, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” †

Mamma.—You do not now need to be

* Heb. iv. 14—16.

† John i. 29.

told, my dear child, *why* our Saviour is called the Lamb of God; nor that the offering of a lamb in the Feast of the Passover typified his being “sacrificed for us :” * but what do we mean when we say, “Grant us thy peace?”

Caroline.—I do not think I can quite explain what it means, mamma.

Mamma.—Nor shall I ever, my own dear child, be able to convey to you by words, any adequate idea of all the blessings promised to us in that word *peace*. I heard an Irish clergyman once say, that his poor countrymen—that is to say, those who have had the privilege of reading the Bible in their own language—call it “the story of *peace*.” And they are right. All the “glad tidings” conveyed to us in the Gospel are included in that word. The title of our Lord himself is the “Prince of *Peace*.” † It is the theme of the prophets, and the song of the angels, who,

* 1 Cor. v. 7.

† Isa. ix. 6.

when they announced the “good tidings of great joy,” which should be such to “all people,”—though “glory to God” was the first and great result to be attained “in the highest,”—“Peace and good will to man” was the promised blessing “on the earth.” It would occupy us a very long time to find out all the beautiful texts in the Scriptures in which peace is held out as the one great boon to be earnestly desired and sought after by all the children of God ; we will therefore only refer to one passage in the Old Testament, and then show how the promise has been fulfilled from the New. Turn to Isaiah ; find the fifty-fourth chapter ; read the eighth verse, my love.

Caroline.—“In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me : for as I have sworn that the waters

of Noah should no more go over the earth ; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall *the covenant of my peace* be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”

Mamma.—Now read the thirteenth verse.

Caroline.—“ And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord ; and great shall be *the peace* of thy children.” *

Mamma.—I have chosen these verses, my dear child, not on account of their beauty only, or the comfort to be derived from them, but because our Lord himself has explained to us, to whom we are to go, if, we would seek this promised peace. He says, referring to this very verse, “ It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard,

* Isa. liv. 8, 9, 10, 13.

and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto *me*.”* It is then by going to Christ that we can alone be brought into this promised “covenant of peace.” We were enemies to God, but Christ has made “peace for us;”† “being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the *world* giveth, give I unto you,”‡ was one of the last promises our blessed Lord made to his disciples ; but it was not to be such a peace as this world values, a freedom from all care or anxiety : for he expressly tells us afterwards, “These things have I spoken unto you, that in *me* ye might have peace. In the *world* ye shall have tribulation.”§ The peace, therefore, that we ask for, is that “peace of God which

* John vi. 45.

† Ephes. ii. 14, and following verses. Also, Romans v. 1.

‡ John xiv. 27.

§ John xvi. 33.

passeth all understanding, which shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* Comber remarks upon this passage, “ We shall only add here, that an ancient author observes, that after ‘Lamb of God,’ the custome was in both places to answer, ‘Have mercy upon us!’ till at length, in a time when the Christian world was miserably harassed with bloody wars, they began to say, ‘Grant us thy peace,’ which hath continued ever since. Yet it is plain this phrase hath been used in the Church’s prayers ever since the time of St. Hierome. Our Saviour had promised his servants that in Him they should have peace, although they could not have it in the world ; wherefore they pray, that when they have tribulation without, they may have peace within ; when from men they have war, they may have peace with God.” The remarks of Comber upon the supplications for mercy

* Phil. iv. 7.

which follow are also so excellent, that I do not see how I can do better than read them to you, as they are not at all beyond your comprehension, but are very plain and simple :—“ We may particularly beseech the Son, as he is our only Intercessor, to have mercy upon us, and to hear us ; but lest we might seem to neglect any of the persons of the glorious Trinity in this address, we do now lastly call upon them every one, in this most primitive form of prayer ; by the first, ‘ Lord, have mercy upon us ! ’ meaning God the Father ; by the second, ‘ Christ, have mercy upon us ! ’ God the Son ; by the last, ‘ Lord, have mercy upon us ! ’ intending God the Holy Ghost : from every person we desire mercy. And this is called the little Litany, being an epitome of the whole, which is a supplication for mercy, according to our several necessities ; but there is a peculiar resemblance between this ‘ Lord, have mercy ! ’ and the first

part of this office, namely, the Invocation; so that those parts of the Litany, whose method is much the same, as hath been thus far, do end just as they began in a petition for mercy. This was that which David beggeth so frequently, Psalm iv. 1, 6; vi. 2, 4; and xxxi. 16; and which all the ancient Christians repeated so often in their devotions. This is that request which the greatest sinner may say successfully, if with true penitence; and yet which the greatest saints had need to say daily, considering their continual infirmities. Some may think we ask it often, but I am sure we need God's mercy much oftener than we do or can pray for it; so that we must never think it a needless repetition for such miserable sinners as we, though never so often to cry, 'Lord, have mercy upon us!' "

Caroline.—Thank you, dear mamma; I think I understand all you have read.

Mamma.—There are two short sentences read after the Lord's Prayer, about which you may perhaps like a little explanation ; and we cannot find a better one than in this nice little book,—“First Sundays at Church.” Read what William says to his papa, at page 106, and Mr. Hargrave's answer.

Caroline.—“ ‘Papa,’ said William, rather suddenly, ‘here is something about which I intended to ask you a question. What does it mean, when we pray, that the Lord will not “deal with us after our sins, neither reward us after our iniquities?” Of course it cannot be that we beseech God to cast us off and have nothing more to do with us, after once we may have sinned against him. Do please to explain this to me, papa.’ ”

“ ‘Very willingly and gladly, my dear boy,’ replied Mr. Hargrave. ‘I am not surprised at your not understanding this expression without its being explained

to you ; because the sense of it depends upon a certain old-fashioned use of one of the words which occur in it, and it is not likely that very young Churchmen know the meaning of very old words, or uses of words. The meaning *after*, in this place, means *according to* ; so that the prayer is, “ O Lord, deal not with us according to our sins, neither reward us according to our iniquities ! ” that is, do not make us to suffer the punishment which our sins and iniquities deserve. The language is adopted from Psalm ciii. 10, “ He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities ; ” where you may observe, the “ after ” in the former clause is explained by “ according to ” in the latter.’

“ ‘ I thank you, papa,’ said William ; ‘ I now understand the prayer very clearly.’ ”

Mamma.—And now, my love, as I

suppose you can say, “ And so do *I* too, mamma,” *I* need say no more on this subject: so we will go and get ready for church.

DIALOGUE XXXVII.

Mamma.—Again does the minister of God call upon us to join with him in supplication and prayer, in that solemn and impressive sentence, “Let us pray!” and the prayers which follow are particularly beautiful. “O God, merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desires of such as be sorrowful!” Observe, my dear child, how much comfort is conveyed to the troubled soul in these few words. If we were imploring the pity or compassion of an earthly sovereign, we might be troubled and perplexed to find appropriate terms in which to express our sorrow: but here no eloquence is required, our sighs

are heard, the “ desires of our *hearts* ” are known to our Father in heaven : as Comber quaintly expresses it, “ He can spell a sigh, and can read the language of a tear, and will not fail to pity them.” “ Lord, thou knowest all my desire,” says David, “ and my groaning is not hid from thee.”* You remember, too, the Psalm in which he says, “ A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” †

Caroline.—Oh yes, mamma ; it is in the fifty-first Psalm.

Mamma.—Yes, my love : and in another Psalm we find the same consolatory promises,—“ The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” ‡ And God has also given another beautiful promise that I should like you to find. It is in the twelfth Psalm.

* Psalm xxxviii. 9. † Psalm li. 17.

‡ Psalm xxxiv. 18.

Caroline.—I have found it, mamma. I think you mean the fifth verse. “For the oppression of the poor, for the *sighing* of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord.”

Mamma.—We see, my dear child, from these beautiful texts, taken from the Word of God, that the “sighing of a contrite heart,” even *without* a word being uttered, will be viewed with pity and compassion by our “merciful Father:” still, as “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,”* it is most natural that our “sighs” and “tears” should be accompanied by fervent prayers and supplications; and, indeed, we are commanded by the Lord to “call upon him in the day of trouble:”† but as “we know not what we should pray for as we ought,”‡ we here intreat that God will “mercifully assist our prayers,” that we make before

* Matt. xii. 34. † Psalm l. 15.

‡ Rom. viii. 26.

Him in all our troubles and adversities whensoever they oppress us : and we know that He *will* do so, from His own gracious assurance ; for he tells us, “ the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us : ” * but for what do we now in this prayer ask his assistance and intreat him “ graciously to hear us ? ”

Caroline.—“ That those evils which the craft and subtilty of the devil or man worketh against us be brought to nought, and by the providence of His goodness they may be dispersed.”

Mamma.—You do not, I know, my dear child, need any explanation of this petition ; but as my object, when we began this delightful occupation, was not only to explain anything not quite understood by you, but also to prove that the Prayer-book is founded upon the Word of God, and to seek for those texts which do thus prove it, we will

* Romans viii. 26.

look for those passages which show how necessary it is we should be ever watchful against the craft and subtilty of Satan. St. Paul warns us to “put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the *wiles* of the devil.”* And again, in another of his Epistles, he not only speaks of the “*devices*”† of Satan, but says, “I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his *subtilty*, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”‡ You see then, my dear child, we cannot be *too earnest* in repeating this prayer. It appears, however, from the title, “A prayer against Persecution,” and from the conclusion, “that we thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church;” that the “*evils*” more especially meant in this prayer, as sug-

* Ephes. vi. 11. † 2 Cor. ii. 11.

‡ 2 Cor. xi. 3.

gested by the “craft” of Satan, to be executed by “man” against the servants of God, are those fearful and cruel persecutions by which the public worship of God is forbidden, the sanctuary is defiled, and his saints oppressed; and therefore this prayer, instead of being ended as all the former ones, by the people answering “Amen!” is continued by their crying out, as it were for help, “O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thy name’s sake!” We know, that we deserve for our ingratitude and many sins, that all these evils should fall upon us; but, like Israel of old, we have been called to be his people; and though, like them, “we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly,”* nevertheless, as he saved *them* for his name’s sake, that he “might make his mighty power to be known,” we intreat him, for the glory of his name, to save *us*. The next sentence is said by the mi-

* Psalm cvi. 6, 8.

nister, who almost in the very words of the Psalmist,* recalls to mind the *former* mercies of God, as a reason why they may put their trust in him *now*, for He is “the same Lord,” “yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”† Read, my love, what the minister says, and the response of the people.

Caroline.—“ ‘ O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them.’ When the people reply, ‘ O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thine honour !’ ”

Mamma.—It would detain us too long, my dear child, upon this subject, to look for all the texts which prove how “diligently” the Jews fulfilled the Divine command to instruct their children carefully, and tell them what great deliverances their God had wrought for them. It will be sufficient for us just now to

* Psalm xliv. 1. † Heb. i. 12; also, xiii. 8.

read some verses of the seventy-eighth Psalm, and the beautiful and eloquent address of Joel, reminding us that the judgments, as well as the mercies of God, ought to be recorded and remembered. Find the seventy-eighth Psalm, and begin at the first verse, and read to the eighth.

Caroline.—“ Give ear, O my people, to my law : incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable : I will utter dark sayings of old ; which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children : that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should

be born ; who should arise and declare them to their children : that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.”

Mamma.—But it is not only the mercies of God that we are to recall to the minds of our children ; we are to *warn* them also, as we may see by the verse which follows those you have read, that if they are “ as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation,” the same judgments will be visited upon them. I will now read to you what God says, by the mouth of his prophet, Joel :—
“ Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers ? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.”* Then follows a fearful and striking description of the miseries

* Joel i. 2, 3.

of a country upon which the wrath of God has fallen. The object, however, of this part of the Litany which we are now considering, is rather to excite the people to *hope*, by reminding them of the “noble works” done for the deliverance of the people of God under former trials and persecutions. It is evidently intended to have this effect; for the voice of supplication is, in a moment, changed to that of praise. The remarks of Comber appear to me so particularly beautiful upon this sudden change in the service, that though it is a long extract, and written in the quaint and somewhat tedious language of that day, I think I must give it you; and as you are now so much older, my dear child, than you were when we first began these conversations, I think you will be able to understand it:—“I doubt not but we shall be convinced that our Church hath most piously and prudently inserted this Doxology here, if we will but apply it to

the ends for which she hath designed it in this place—namely, first as an act of praise for all those NOBLE ACTS which we have heard our God hath done for his Church in all ages ; for if we be truly sensible of them, we cannot think of them, nor mention them without gratitude and admiration ; the very commemoration will oblige us to break forth into a thanksgiving to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by whom all these wonders have been wrought. But to this it will be replied, that if we really be (as our Litany supposeth us) in a state of trouble, it will be as contrary to our temper, as unsuitable to our condition, to rejoice and give thanks. ‘ How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land ? ’ * say the Jewish exiles to those who required of them melody in their heaviness. ‘ The affliction of an hour,’ saith a wise man, ‘ maketh one forget pleasure.’ † And we may

* Psalm cxxxvii. 3, 4. † Ecclus. xi. 27.

observe, that when calamities are upon us we can hardly be grateful for former mercies : but I am sure, though we are not inclined to be thankful for received favours, yet we are obliged to be so. (I fancy, by this expression, Comber means, yet we *ought* to be so.) And it would be a great alloy to present sufferings, if we did call to mind the ‘right hand of the Most High.’ If we can bring our hearts to praise God in the midst of our sufferings, it will make the burden lighter, and us more able to bear it, as well as God more willing to remove it ; a little mixture of Eucharist ; for ancient deliverances will effectually recommend our present petitions for like mercies.”

Caroline.—“A little mixture of Eucharist,” mamma ; I do not understand what that means.

Mamma.—I do not wonder at it, my dear child, for the word Eucharist is now only applied generally to the sacra-

ment of the Lord's Supper ; but it also means, simply giving thanks, and is used in that sense here, and might just as well be read so, and then I think it will be clear to you, will it not ?

Caroline.—Yes, Mamma, I think I understand it now. A little mixture of *giving thanks* or praise for our *past* deliverances, would make our *present* prayers more acceptable.

Mamma.—Quite right, my love ; but I more particularly wish you to attend to the remarks which follow, for though you have often, my dear child, heard from me similar sentiments, I could not express them so well, and therefore I have preferred reading them to you from the “ little book.” He adds—“ Secondly, We ought to apply this *Gloria Patri* as an act of faith ; we must not only look back on former blessings with joy and comfort, but forward also upon the mercies we now pray for, though we have not received them. The worst of

men, when they have got their desires, can give thanks; but a pious and devout Christian, reflecting upon the past memorials of Divine goodness, can ask deliverance with so cheerful a hope, and so firm persuasions to prevail; as that he can give thanks for a mercy before it be received. It is St. Chrysostom's observation, that a soul full of hope prays and immediately praises God, as if it had presently obtained its desires. He hath delivered our Fathers wonderfully and often; wherefore we beseech him to set us free also; and to testifie, we beg this with faith and noble expectations, we do already sing, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. St. Paul informs us, that faith is the evidence of things not seen, and that hope makes us enjoy things absent with a pleasure almost equal to the most present fruition; and therefore, if we firmly believe that God will deliver us, there is no reason why we

should defer our comfort in reflecting on it, or detain his praise who will accomplish it; we may, yea, we ought to give, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.' And what more lovely spectacle doth this world afford, than a pious, yet afflicted man, so supported by faith and hope, so full of all honourable thoughts of God, and so sweetly relying on his aid, that he can sing praises in the midst of his fiery furnace, and satisfy himself with mercy at a distance, merely because it is in the hands of a gracious Disposer? If there be any method to engage the love of heaven, or bring in the celestial powers to our rescue, it must be by these high and noble opinions of the Divine goodness; and surely the Father of mercies will not disappoint those who have praised him for deliverance already, because they believe it is surer in his

DIALOGUE XXXVIII.

Mamma.—It may seem a little inconsistent with the praises which have but just been offered up, to return again so immediately to earnest supplication ; and yet it suits well with the knowledge which each day brings us, of the uncertainty of all earthly things.* Sorrow endures for a night, and joy comes in the morning, and then, if we should imagine we were quite free from all care, and that “our mountain stood strong, and would never be removed,” God turns away his face from us, and we are troubled. Those who sorrow are not to sorrow as those “without hope,”† and those who rejoice are to “rejoice

* Psalm xxx. 5—7. † 1 Thess. iv. 13.

with trembling ;”* and when the Apostle bids us “rejoice evermore,”† he adds, “Pray without ceasing,” and, “in *everything* give thanks.” It suits, therefore, well with our lives, “throughout which goodness and mercy follow us continually,” and yet are ever to be passed in conflicts, and trials, and trouble, to mingle thus prayer and praise. The supplications which follow are peculiarly earnest and comprehensive, for every trial that can befall us may be included under one or other of the petitions. We intreat to be defended from our enemies, and that God would graciously look upon our afflictions ; that he would pitifully behold the sorrows of our hearts ; and that he will mercifully forgive us our sins, and favourably hear our prayers. Can you tell me why we then appeal to our Lord as the Son of David ?

Caroline.—I cannot think of any other

* Psalm ii. 11. † 1 Thess. v. 16—18.

reason, mamma, than because he is called the son of David in the Bible.

Mamma.—I think he is thus addressed here to remind us, that he took our nature upon him, and can, therefore, be “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.”* We afterwards call upon Him as our “Lord Christ,” by which we show that we believe that he has the *power* as well as the will to help us, and conclude these earnest addresses, as David concludes the thirty-third Psalm, by declaring that we put our trust in Him,—“Let thy mercy,” says David, “O Lord, be upon us according as we hope in thee.” The prayer that follows has always appeared to me so particularly beautiful and appropriate to all those in affliction, that I should not have supposed it possible that any one could ever have objected to it; but I find that it was classed among those said to have been taken from the Roman

* Heb. iv. 15.

Mass-book ; but in doing so, our Reformers appear to have deprived it of all that could render it objectionable. By the Roman Catholics it was corrupted by being addressed to God through the *intercession* of *all the saints*, instead of *through Christ only* ; but the compilers of our Liturgy appear to have been particularly careful, that it should not be imagined that we put our trust in any creature but God alone. Read it, my dear child.

Caroline.—“ We humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities, and for the glory of thy name turn from us all those evils which we most righteously have deserved.” Mamma, does not the word “righteously,” in this place, mean only rightly or justly deserved ?

Mamma.—Yes, my dear child.

Caroline.—“ And grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore

serve thee in holiness and pureness of living, to thy honour and glory, through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Mamma.—You see, my dear child, that we pray that we may put *our whole trust* and confidence in God's mercy, and that we conclude by declaring Jesus Christ to be our *only* Mediator and Advocate. There is not a word said about the intercession of saints; and it appears strange that any one, who has ever learned from the Word of God, that we may *go "boldly to the throne of grace,"** and "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need," through the powerful intercession of "the Son of God," our "great High Priest," should ever think of seeking help from any inferior being. Yet so, alas! it is; and in the Romish Church, prayer is frequently addressed not only to the Almighty, through the saints, but imme-

* Heb. iv. 14—16.

diately to the *saints themselves*, forgetting that our Lord himself said, “No man cometh to the Father but by me ;” * and that God has said, “I am the Lord : that is my name : and my glory will I not give to another.” †

* John xiv. 6.

† Isa. xlii. 8.

DIALOGUE XXXIX.

Mamma.—What part of the service are we to consider this morning, my dear Caroline ?

Caroline.—The “ General Thanksgiving,” mamma.

Mamma.—In the Exhortation, at the commencement of the service, we were reminded that one of the chief objects for which we are to “ assemble and meet together,” is “ to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands,” and “ to set forth his most worthy praise.” It is, therefore, most proper, that although we have in many parts of the previous service mingled praises with our prayers, we should, in a more especial manner,

enumerate the various mercies, both spiritual and temporal, which the “Father of all mercies” * has so abundantly bestowed upon “us and upon all men.” And, first, we bless God for our “creation and preservation.” “By thee have I been holden up ever since I was born; my praise shall be continually of thee,” says David. I am sorry, my dear child, to say, that there are persons in this world so unhappy as to think that it is quite beneath the dignity of the Almighty Creator of the universe to trouble himself with the affairs of men, but that after he had created all things, and pronounced them to be “very good,” he made certain *laws*, by which the *whole creation* was for the future to be governed, but never troubles himself with the fate of individuals. Such persons can never read their Bibles, and certainly ought not to call themselves Christians; for we

* 2 Cor. i. 3.

know that our Lord assures us, that not “even a sparrow” is “forgotten of God,”* and that in His sight we are of “more value than many sparrows :” and how could we walk through this world of trial and misery, this “vale of tears,” as it has been called, “always rejoicing,” were it not for this belief, that he is not only our Creator, but our Preserver, nay, still more, our Father and our Friend, and that to Him alone are we indebted for all the “blessings of this life.” Can you tell me, my dear child, what are the blessings for which we thus desire to return thanks ?

Caroline.—Oh, mamma, it would be almost impossible to name them all, there are so many. There is life and health, and friends, and food and clothing, and shelter, and fire, and light, and so many many things, that I could not number them.

* Luke xii. 6, 7.

Mamma.—True, indeed, my dearest child ; we may indeed repeat,—

“ Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ ;
Nor is the least a thankful heart,
That tastes those gifts with joy.”

For strange as it may appear, that any one should be so insensible to the goodness of God, as to have a thankless and repining and discontented spirit, it is nevertheless true, that we are all too prone to fall into a state of cold ingratitude and to forget how utterly unworthy we are of the least mercy. The Almighty himself warns us, by the mouth of his servant Moses, against this very sin. Let us read what he says :—“ When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his

statutes, which I command thee this day : lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein ; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied ; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.”* Nor should we forget to number amongst these many mercies having been “ born in a land where the true light shineth,” where the Sabbath-day is kept holy, and where we not only have the privilege of going “ up into the house of the Lord,” and hearing “ His holy Word read and preached,” but where we all may have our Bible in our houses, as a lamp to our path, and as a constant, a daily, an hourly guide, to lead us into the “ paths of pleasantness and peace ;” for in this blessed book we

* Deut. viii. 10—14.

find, that “ God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ;” * and for this his “ inestimable love ” we desire “ above all ” to return thanks ; for have we not been redeemed from worse than Egyptian bondage ? Let us then give “ thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son : in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” † You understand, my dear child, do you not, what part of the Thanksgiving it is that I have chosen these texts to explain ?

Caroline.—Oh, yes, mamma ; after having returned thanks for “ all the blessings of this life,” we say, “ But above all, for thine inestimable love in

* John iii. 16.

† Col. i. 12—14.

the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Mamma.—Quite right, my love. We next mention the “means of grace.” Can you tell me what these are?

Caroline.—Prayer is one, is it not, mamma? and reading the Bible, and going to church and having the Word of God explained to us; these are all means of grace, are they not, mamma?

Mamma.—Yes, dearest child; and Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord, are also means of grace appointed by the Lord himself. They are, as you learn in your Catechism, “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.” We therefore return thanks to God for these “means of grace,” and also for the “hope of glory;” and in this we are only following the example of the apostles themselves. “Blessed,”

says St. Peter, “ be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”* St. Paul, too, frequently gives “ thanks to God ”† for this “ hope ; ” but one text will suffice for us just now, as it is drawing near the time for preparing for Church. He says, “ We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”‡ Still feeling our utter inability to do any good thing of ourselves, and that we cannot even thank him as we ought without he inclines our hearts to feel what “ a joyful and pleasant thing it

* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

† Col. i. 3—5.

‡ Rom. v. 1, 2.

is to be thankful,"* we beseech him to give us that due sense of all his mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may show forth his praise, not only with our lips but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to his service, and by walking before him in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. This beautiful form of "sound words" concludes by ascribing to God, the Son, and Holy Ghost, all honour and glory, world without end. To which let us add, my dearest child, our hearty Amen.

* Psalm cxlvii. 1.

DIALOGUE XL.

Mamma.—We have now arrived at that prayer with which, when the Communion Service is not read, the morning service concludes ; the congregation being dismissed after it is read, with the blessing called the Apostolic Benediction, because it is the same used by the Apostle Paul at the close of his Epistle to the Church at Corinth. The prayer is called the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, because it was written by him ; and if we had no other reason to honour his memory, we should feel grateful to him for having left us this beautiful prayer.

Caroline.—Who was St. Chrysostom, mamma ?

Mamma.—St. Chrysostom was a native of Antioch, born, it is supposed, about the year 347. As the name of Chrysostom signifies *golden mouth*, we must suppose that he was very eloquent. In the year 397 he was chosen Patriarch or Archbishop of Constantinople, and acquired much reputation, not only as a preacher, but for the holiness of his life. It is said by his enemies that his manners were too austere, and that he indulged in a persecuting spirit. These enemies became at length so powerful, that they succeeded in procuring his banishment, and he was conveyed to a desolate town, situated among the ridges of Mount Taurus, in Lesser Armenia. But Chrysostom did not suffer his mind to sink under his misfortunes, but actively employed himself in maintaining a correspondence with the most distant provinces, and in exhorting and consoling his friends; and, it is said, that his enemies, mortified at seeing him

living so happily, procured an order for his being removed still further from the capital, to Pityceus, a town on the Euxine Sea ; but, owing to the great hardships to which he was exposed, he died on his journey, at Comanis, in Armenia. He left behind him many valuable works, amongst others, a liturgy, from which the beautiful prayer we are now considering is taken. It is so simple, that I do not think you can require any explanation of any part of it, so that all we have to do is to follow our delightful plan of comparing it with the Scriptures, so that, finding we are asking only according to the will of God, we may make known our requests with holy confidence and joy. “ Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee.” We here begin, with the acknowledgment that it is from God alone that we have received the grace which enables us to come unto

him in prayer; we next proceed to plead his gracious promise, and whenever we can bring a *promise* from the Word of God, we “know that,” as St. John assures us, “we *have* the petitions that we desired of him.”* We plead this promise of our Lord, that “if two shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven; for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”† Blessed privilege: God grant, my beloved child, that we may never cease as a *family*, as also “in the congregation,”‡ to avail ourselves of the *promised blessing* upon *united prayer*. Having, then, pleaded this promise, we intreat the Lord to “fulfil the desires and petitions of his servants as may be most *expedient* for them;” for though our desires and requests may in

* 1 John v. 14, 15. † Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

‡ Psalm cxi. 1.

themselves be right and lawful, God, who knows all things, may, in his wisdom, see that it would not be “expedient”* for us to grant them, or even, if granted, that another *time* would be better for us; we should, therefore, in all our prayers for blessings not spiritual—and to such desires and petitions I think the prayer here alludes—remember our Lord’s own example, and add, “Not my will, but thine be done!”† But for the two petitions which follow, we may ask without any such reservation, because they come under those petitions which we “*know*” we are asking according to his will, and therefore we may come “boldly to the throne of grace,” to ask in this world for “the knowledge of the truth,”‡ “and in the world to come, life everlasting.” What follows this prayer, my dear child?

Caroline.—The blessing, mamma,

* 1 Cor. x. 23. † Luke xxii. 42.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

taken from St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians. It is the very last verse, being the blessing with which he concludes the Epistle ; and you told me it is called for this reason the Apostolic Benediction.

Mamma.—We need not, my dear child, pause here to discuss the propriety of thus dismissing the people with a blessing. It is so evident, that the only thing to cause surprise is, that any one can be so regardless of the blessing thus pronounced, as to leave the church before it has been said. It is a perfect summary of all the unspeakable blessings conferred upon us by the Holy Trinity. The grace, that is, the continued favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, is placed first in order, because it is through that favour alone* we can obtain the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost ; and this grace of the Son, this love of the Father, .

* Hebrews vii. 25.

and this fellowship of the Holy Ghost, is asked for us, by Christ's ambassador,* to "be with us all evermore." Let us, then, with holy reverence, receive the blessing as from God himself, and, full of comfort and joy, say from our hearts—Amen.

* 2 Cor. v. 20.

DIALOGUE XLI.

Mamma.—In the Dedication of the Selection of Hymns we sing at church,* my dear Caroline, a text from Isaiah has been selected, which most beautifully describes that part of the Church service which will next occupy our attention. “Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.”† This ought to be a most delightful part of our worship, elevating our thoughts to that time when the redeemed of the Lord shall not “sing the Lord’s song in a strange land,” but around the throne of God

* Psalms and Hymns selected for the use of the Congregation of Christ Church, Brighton.

† Isaiah li. 3.

shall raise their voices in one harmonious Hallelujah ! but it has until very lately been strangely neglected, and even now it is often a painful instead of a delightful service. I think it is a remark of the good George Herbert, that in many places the singers appear to be thinking only of singing to their “own praise and glory,” instead of “the praise and glory of God ;” in others, the want of harmony, the *discord* occasioned by the music being set in too high a key for those who join in the singing, is grating to the ear of those whose taste has been cultivated ; while in some churches it grieves *the heart*, and *that* is worse than hurting the ear ; to observe, as has been remarked by a modern writer, “the cold, indevout, drawing-room tone which prevails during this part of our public worship.” In the little book,* which I have already so frequently recommended to you, you

* “First Sundays at Church.”

will find some very interesting remarks upon this subject, and some quotations from the writings of Archbishop Secker, and another writer, which are so appropriate that I do not think you can do better than read them. Get the book; you will find them at page 117, in answer to some remarks made by little William.

Caroline (reading).—“ Very well, my dear (replied Mr. Hargrave), let me read to you what an archbishop (Secker) has said upon this subject:—‘ All persons who are by nature qualified, ought to learn, and constantly join to glorify Him that made them, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.’ This was the practice of the early Christians; it was restored very justly at the Reformation, and hath declined of late, within most of our memories, very unhappily. For the improvements made by a few in Church music, were they real improvements, will seldom equal the harmony of

a general chorus in which any lesser dissonances are quite lost; and it is something inexpressibly elevating to hear ‘the voice of a great multitude as the voice of many waters, and of mighty thunders (to speak in the words of Scripture), making a joyful noise to the God of their salvation, and singing his praises with understanding.’ ” Thus far the archbishop. And it has been well said by another writer, to the same effect, “When Christians sing altogether in some easy tune, accommodated to the words of their praise, and not likely to take off their attention from sense to sound; then, as experience shows, they perform this service most devoutly and effectually. The symphony of voice and the sympathy of heart flow through the whole congregation; and this is the finest music to truly serious persons, and the most acceptable to God, of any in the world. To sing with grace in their hearts unto the Lord, is the melody of

heaven itself; and it often brings a fore-taste of heaven to the redeemed even here. But jingle, piping, sound, and singing, without this divine accompaniment, are grating and discordant harshness with God, and lifeless insipidity to the souls of the people.”

Mamma.—Thank you, my dear child. As it is a subject upon which taste and feeling enters so much, it may be difficult to make this part of the service uniform in all our churches. Some persons are deeply affected by the music of our cathedrals; some object to any choir or choristers, as preventing the singing being, as it ought always to be, congregational; some object to any instrumental music, excepting that of the organ; and some object even to that: and all, perhaps, would be able to bring forward the Scriptures in their favour; for in the Temple service, we know many instruments of music were used, by the commandment of the Lord

himself. Find the twenty-ninth chapter of the Second Book of Chronicles, and read the beautiful description there given of the re-opening of the Lord's house* by the good King Hezekiah. Begin, my dear child, at the twenty-fifth verse.

Caroline. —“ And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for *so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.* And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped,

* 2 Chron. xxix. 3.

and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded : and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.”

Mamma.—You see the advocates for instrumental music would have a great deal to say in favour of their system. But, on the other hand, those who favour simple congregational singing would say, This could not be the custom of the early Church, when they met in the upper rooms of houses, and where we are told “ it was their custom to sing a hymn to Christ as to God.” Our Lord himself sang a hymn with his

disciples after the celebration of his last supper ; Paul and Silas “ sang praises ” in their prison ; and many a forest, and mountain and cave, has resounded to the sacred hymns of the martyrs ; and can we suppose that such devotion did not ascend to the throne of God, as acceptable worship ? and rose up before Him as sweetly as if accompanied by all the harmony of solemn sounds ? But let us now see if we can find anything in the New Testament upon this subject. We have already seen that we have the example of our Lord himself. “ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.”* “ Is any merry,” said St. James, “ let him sing psalms.”† “ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,”‡ says St. Paul to the Ephesians ; and in his Epistle to

* Matt. xxvi. 30.

† James v. 13.

‡ Ephes. v. 19.

the Colossians, he gives to the practice of singing a more solemn and important office than merely offering up the thanks and praises of a grateful heart, for he says, “ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; *teaching* and *admonishing one another* in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*

These are nearly all the directions given on the subject, I think, in the New Testament ; and they all imply simply lifting up the voice and heart. There is nothing said of pomp or form, or the accompaniment of solemn sound, of harp, or psaltery, or trumpets—the principal thing is to take care to “ sing with the heart and understanding also.”† But you will, perhaps, like to know, my dear child, after having found that so much may be said in favour of either system, what are my own opinions on the subject.

* Col. iii. 16.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

Caroline.—Yes, dear Mamma, I should like to hear them very well.

Mamma.—*Individually, then,* I love to hear the “pealing organ swell the note of praise;” to *me* it is a hallowed instrument, associated in my mind with holy thoughts, and I cannot bear to hear it, as it seems to me, *profaned* by any other music being performed upon it than music sacred to the worship of God; but much as I like the solemn sound, it is only when it accompanies the *voice* of *praise*, not the voices only of a *paid* and frequently careless and indifferent choir, but the voices of the whole congregation. This is the kind of music I should like best *myself*; but when I find *so many* different opinions, some liking the simple congregational singing without any accompaniment; while some are deeply affected, and their feelings of devotion decreased by the music of our cathedrals, I feel that it is perhaps wisely left as it is; and that all we should as

Christians desire is, that the *heart* should be engaged in this as in other parts of the service, by the remembrance that it is also a part of the worship of God.

DIALOGUE XLII.

Mamma.—After singing the hymn, the part of the service which follows next is called the Communion, because it forms part of the administration of the Lord's-supper, as you will find by turning to your Prayer-book. It is there entitled, The Order of the Administration of the Lord's-supper; or, the Holy Communion. In the earliest and purest ages of the Church, we are told this sacrament was celebrated as constantly as the public prayers, which, as Comber remarks, ought to "humble us for the sad decay of Christian devotion;" and he appears to think that it is for this reason that our Church orders a part of the service still to be read. The priest,

as directed by the rubric, “standing at the north side of the table,” repeats the Lord’s-Prayer, as an introduction to what may be considered another service. Having said so much upon this prayer already, we need not dwell upon it now, but go on to the next most beautiful collect. It needs no explanation; but it will afford us a delightful occupation to compare it with the Word of God, and search out some of the texts which prove how truly it is founded on the Scriptures. We address the Almighty as one unto whom “all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid.” In that beautiful prayer of Solomon’s at the dedication of the Temple, he implores the Lord to hear the prayers of every man which shall know the plague of his *own heart*, and shall spread forth his hands towards that house, and to forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose “heart thou knowest;

for thou, even thou only," he adds, "knowest the *hearts* of all the children of men."* "Lord, all my desire is before thee," says David, "and my groaning is not hid from thee."† And in another psalm he says, "Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the *heart*."‡ But there is a still more striking passage in the Prophet Ezekiel. Look for the 11th chapter, my dear child:—the "princes of the people" were giving "wicked counsel," and "devising mischief," and the prophet is commanded to "Speak; *Thus* saith the Lord; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for *I know* the things that *come into your mind, every one* of them."§ To this Almighty God then, "from whom no secrets are hid," do we pray that he would "cleanse the *thoughts of our heart* by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit." This prayer is peculiarly

* 1 Kings viii. 38, 39.

† Psalm xxxviii. 9.

‡ Psalm xlv. 21.

§ Ezek. xi. 5.

appropriate in this place, as it precedes the reading of the Ten Commandments, and reminds us that it is not only to the literal, but to the *spiritual* meaning of those commandments we are to direct our attention. This is explained to us by our Lord himself, and proves to us, that though we might proudly imagine that we had not broken the law, because we had not outwardly offended against any one of its precepts taken *literally*, that, as it is from “*the heart* all evil thoughts” * proceed, we are yet sinners in the sight of God. Do you understand me, my love, and remember the words of our Lord to which I allude?

Caroline.—I think I do, Mamma. In his sermon on the Mount, our Saviour explains that he who hates his brother breaks the sixth commandment, which says, Thou shalt not kill; or, Thou shalt do no murder.

Mamma.—You see then, my love,

* Matt. xv. 19.

how needful is this prayer, that God would be pleased to *cleanse* the *thoughts* of our *hearts*, that we may perfectly love him ; “ for this is the love of God,” says St. John, “ that we keep his commandments,”* and may thus “ worthily magnify his holy name.” And now, my own dear child, let us earnestly repeat this prayer before we begin the contemplation of those commandments, which, we must remember, our Lord himself told us he came “ not to destroy, but to fulfil.” I fear this is too often forgotten, and that there are even persons who say they were intended only for the Jews, and are not *now* binding upon Christians ; at least, this argument is used in regard to the command respecting keeping holy the Sabbath-day ; and if that one is not binding upon us, why are the others ? We will not, however, talk of this now ; but turn again to our Lord’s own discourse. He ex-

* 1 John v. 3.

pressly says, that he came “not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it;”* and he then explains that his disciples are not to break the least of the commandments, but that *their* righteousness should *exceed* the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. The Scribes and Pharisees we know were very zealous for the outward and literal fulfilment of the law, because they made it one of their chief accusations against our Lord, his profaning the Sabbath, even by healing the sick; but the righteousness of his disciples must *exceed* that of the Pharisees, by attending not only to the *letter* of the law, but to the more *spiritual meaning*, which would lead to watchfulness over the *heart*, from whence arise those evil thoughts and tempers likely to lead to the actual and literal transgression of the law. Our Lord then proceeds to show that in the sight of God the spirit of the law might be broken by an angry

* Matt. v. 17 to the end.

word and a sinful look. The beloved apostle, St. John, also tells us the same thing, when he says, “He that *hateth* his brother is a murderer.”* But we will leave the explanation of the commandments till next Sunday.

* 1 John iii. 15.

DIALOGUE XLIII.

Mamma.—I have already, my dear Caroline, written out for you many texts, which I had selected for your dear brothers, preparatory to their confirmation, which exemplify this part of our subject, and I might give them to you to read ; but, perhaps, you would prefer talking upon the subject, and looking for the texts together with me ?

Caroline.—Oh, yes, if you please, mamma, I should like it much better.

Mamma.—St. Paul tells us, in his Epistle to the Galatians, that “ the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ ; ” * that is to say, that when we read all these commandments, remembering that

* Gal. iii. 24.

nothing but a *perfect, sinless* obedience to them, can justify us before a holy and just God, we *must* at once feel ourselves to be condemned criminals, and thus taught our own sinfulness, and that we are under a curse, because it is written, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* which are written in the law to do them :”* we should be in despair could we not go to Christ, and see in him our Saviour and Redeemer. Nothing can be therefore more appropriate than the appointment of our Church, that these commandments should be read before we commemorate in the holy sacrament the great love and mercy of Christ’s dying for us, and thus redeeming us from the curse we have by our disobedience brought upon ourselves ; for, as I mentioned before, it was originally intended, that whenever this part of the service was read, that it should be followed by the administration of the

* Gal. iii. 10.

Lord's-supper. But let us now read what the rubric says, for I think it there gives us directions in what spirit the commandments should be listened to.

Caroline.—"Then shall the priest, turning to the people, rehearse *distinctly* all the ten commandments ; and the people, still kneeling, shall after every commandment ask God mercy for their transgression thereof for the time past, and grace to keep the same for the time to come, as followeth."

Mamma.—There is something solemnly impressive in the manner in which the commandments are introduced, with "God spake these words, and said, I am the Lord thy God." God spake these words ; surely with awe and reverence should we listen to the words that follow. The *four first* commandments relate to our duty towards God, the six others contain directions as to our conduct towards our neighbours. The four first are called the laws of the first table,

the others the laws of the second table. Can you tell me why ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, I think I can. When God gave the commandments to Moses, they were written on two tables of stone, and the first contained our duty towards God, because that is the most important ; and the second, the laws respecting our duty towards our neighbour. I have been looking for a text in which our Saviour thus describes the law,—it is in the twelfth chapter of Mark, mamma. One of the Scribes asked him, “ Which is the first commandment of all ? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel ; The Lord our God is one Lord : and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength : this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

There is none other commandment greater than these.” *

Mamma.—Thank you, my love : we will now consider the laws of the first table, and the first commandment, “Thou shalt have none other gods but me.” I have heard children say, I am sure *I* do not break this commandment ; *I* do not worship any other God. This applies only to Idolaters or Atheists ; but our Church does not think so ;—she bids the people respond, “ Lord, have mercy upon us, and *incline* our *hearts* to keep this law.” She knows too well, as every one who searches and examines his own heart must acknowledge, that though we may with our lips acknowledge “ no other God,” yet we may in our heart and in practice deny him. The Infidel may *say*, that he does not believe that God takes any thought or care for his creatures ; but does not the child who is afraid of being left alone in the dark,

* Mark xii. 28—31.

in *practice* show that he thinks the same ? for if he really believed, as he professes to do, that God is everywhere, and watches over and protects those who trust in him, why should he fear ? Is it not a want of faith ? Any want of trust in his mercy, any doubt of his promises, expecting more help from our poor fellow-creatures than from him, is, in a degree, breaking the spirit of this commandment ; and the same may be said of the second commandment, though we may not bow before any image, or with foolish superstition pay that reverence to external objects which is due to *God alone*, still we may set up an idol in our heart ; and those who act in any way contrary to the dictates of their conscience, for the sake of wealth, or any worldly honours or distinctions, are, in fact, making that wealth or honour as much an idol in their *heart* as if they were literally to bow down before a golden image and worship it. They

are honouring the god of this world, and can they, or do they, even pretend to say, that they love God with all their heart, and soul, and mind, and strength? Well, then, may all exclaim, “Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law!” I do not think, my dear child, that you can need that I should point out to you the constant watchfulness and care that is requisite to preserve us from the sin of breaking the third commandment. How needful is the prayer, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!”* I need not remind you, that naming the holy name of God, without solemnity and reverence, or bringing it forward upon trifling occasions, is breaking this commandment;—even the mere customs of society would guard you from any open profanation of his holy name. I would rather warn

* Psalm cxli. 3.

you to watch against this sin, in more solemn moments, in the house of God, and in prayer, lest by wandering thoughts, and careless indifference, or mere formality, taking his name into your lips while your heart is far from him,* you should be found to be taking the “name of God in vain.” A foolish and irreverent manner of speaking of anything connected with the worship of God, his house, his Word, his ministers, should be carefully avoided.

Caroline.—Oh, yes, dear mamma, I know you have often warned us against this, or even foolish exclamations, and reminded us of the text, “Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;”† and I hope I shall remember it always.

Mamma.—God grant it, my dear child, and teach us from our hearts to

* Isa. xxix. 13.

† Matt. v. 37.

pray, “ Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.” But it is getting late, and we must reserve the remainder of the commandments to another Sunday.

DIALOGUE XLIV.

Mamma.—I feel, my dear Caroline, that I can scarcely have anything to say to you upon the subject of the Fourth Commandment, so constantly have you from your earliest childhood been taught to consider the “Sabbath a delight,”* “honourable,” a blessed privilege, a day of peculiar pleasure and enjoyment, a day which, if rightly spent, brings a blessing upon the whole week; so often have you heard me tell of the good Sir Matthew Hale, and his having for fifty years kept a record of how the Sunday was passed, and *found* that if from any cause he had been led to perform upon it any business not connected with the

* Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

more immediate service of God, so surely did he find, in the course of the following week, something or other to remind him, that if he “robbed God” of the time which he had appointed for his service, God’s blessing was not shed upon the labours of the week, and that even *the time* he thought to gain was lost. I do not think I can have anything new to tell you, but well may we exclaim, “This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Caroline.—I think, dear mamma, that Sunday always is a happy day.

Mamma.—It rejoices me to hear you say so, my dear child. I remember dear Amelia once saying, she thought the *birds* sang more on Sundays. I often think, too, that there is a difference in my *own* feelings, and that there is more peace, more gratitude in my heart towards the Almighty Giver of all good, when I lay my head on my pillow

on Saturday night, remembering that “to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath,”* than on any other night; and when I awake on the morning of this hallowed day, I generally repeat those lines, which you may remember, are very favourite lines of mine. I do not know who they are written by :—

“ Sleep, sleep to-day, tormenting cares,
Of Earth and Folly born ;
Ye shall not dim the light that streams
From this celestial morn.

“ To-morrow will be time enough
To feel your harsh control :
Ye shall not violate this day,
The Sabbath of my soul.”

Indeed, the longer I live, the more I feel convinced that *now*, as in the days of old, a *peculiar blessing* is attached to those who hallow this sacred day. “Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from pol-

* Exodus xvi. 23.

luting it :” * and in the 20th chapter of Ezekiel, we have an awful warning given us, in the wrath of God expressed against the *nation* of the Israelites, for their rebellion against the Lord, more especially for “polluting” his Sabbaths. “Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a *sign between me and them*, that they *might know* that *I am the Lord* that sanctify them.” † And I believe that they are *still* “*a sign*” between God and his people, and that by the proper observance of *this sign*, according to the promise, a greater knowledge of the Lord is attained, and greater blessings procured, both individually and nationally. There is something to me particularly impressive, too, in the manner in which this commandment is expressed. Do you understand what I mean, dear child ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma, I think so. You mean, that it begins with the word

* Isa. lvi. 2. † Ezek. xx. 12, 20.

“REMEMBER,” which none of the others do.

Mamma.—I do, my dear child ; and a sweet young friend, to whom I was conversing on the use of this word, said, it appeared also to convey to her mind the impression—“Remember,” this is not only a *command*,—it is a *privilege* ; and it is, indeed, so great a privilege, so great a blessing, I cannot at all understand how any one can wish to have it abolished. Can guilty, fallen man have less *need* of a day solely devoted to the service of the Almighty, a day to recal his thoughts from earth and its cares to that “rest that remaineth to the people of God,” than man in Paradise ? Yet the Sabbath was ordained to be kept *holy*, more peculiarly holy, *even* in Paradise ; and if it was *then* “made for man,” how much more must it be necessary now !—but I need say no more. May God grant we may none of us be found among those who

find it a weariness, and exclaim, “When will the Sabbath be gone!”* I have only one thing to remark upon this commandment, which we are apt to overlook: it is a command to work and labour with diligence, as well as to “*rest.*” “Six days shalt thou labour, and *do all that thou hast to do.*” And now, my dear child, say to me the hymn, which, out of the many very beautiful hymns for this day, “the best of all the seven,” I think is, after all, my favourite.

Caroline.—I think, mamma, you mean—

“Blest day of God! how calm, how bright!
A day of joy and praise;
The labourer’s rest, the saint’s delight,
The first and best of days.

“My Saviour’s face did make thee shine;
His rising thee did raise;
This made thee heavenly and divine,
Beyond the common days.

* Amos viii. 5.

“ This day I must for God appear,
For, Lord, the day is thine ;
But spent and hallowed in thy fear,
Its blessing shall be mine.

“ As the first-fruits an earnest prove
Of all the sheaves behind ;
So they who do the Sabbath love,
A happy week shall find.”

Mamma.—Thank you, my dear child.
Let us now prepare for the delightful service of the sanctuary ; for, in the words of another hymn, we may say—

“ Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise thy name, give thanks, and sing ;
To show thy love by morning light,
And talk of all thy truth by night.”

DIALOGUE XLV.

Mamma.—We are now, my dear child, to consider the laws of the second table, which contain the commandments respecting our duty to our neighbour, that is, towards *all* men. The first of these commandments bids us honour our father and our mother. In these days, more especially, we are called upon to be watchful that we transgress not in any way against this commandment; for we are told, that in the “latter days,” one of the fearful signs of the “falling away” from the faith shall be “disobedience to parents.” I should be grieved, however, my dear child, to think that you should require *now* to be taught the duty of implicit and unques-

tioning obedience to your parents ; what I am rather desirous of pointing out to you, and of warning you to be *watchful* against, is the *manner* in which it is the duty of Christian children to render this obedience. It should not only be readily, cheerfully rendered, but with respectful reverence also. The customs of society have most happily, I think, banished that formal outward deference and reserve which, in days long past, forbade children even to speak or sit in the presence of their parents ; and a happy and constant communication and interchange of love and confidence is, or ought to be, established between the parent and child ; but we must be careful not to lose the remembrance, that “honour” and reverence must still be paid by the younger towards the elder at all times. Be watchful, therefore, my dear child, over yourself. I have seen, I am sorry to say, in those who, I am sure, *really love* and *honour* their parents,

a manner of speaking to them, and of contradicting them, and of saying, when requested to do anything, in a querulous and impatient tone, “I had rather not, if you please;” the “*if you please*,” being rather in the tone of command than of deference, which, I am sure, had they been aware of it, would have distressed the really affectionate, and, in *all essential* points, most obedient children. It has also been my painful lot to witness, in some children, total disrespect, and an improper familiarity of manner towards a parent.

Caroline.—But, mamma, do you not think that the parent must have been first to blame?

Mamma.—Undoubtedly, my child; but though the parents who fail in their duty will have to answer for their conduct before God, the conduct of the parent, whatever it may be, can be no excuse for the child to neglect the plain and positive commandment of God.

The directions which St. Peter gives to servants may be well applied in the case of children towards their parents, and, indeed, to all placed under authority. Look for them, my dear child ; you will find them in the First Epistle of Peter, the second chapter. Read the 18th, 19th, and 20th verses.

Caroline.—“ Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently ? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.”

Mamma.—Thank you, my love ; it will be well at all times to remember, that, in all relative duties, the conduct of *others* has nothing to do with *our* conduct towards them. Parents and masters ought to be always kind and gentle,

“ forbearing threatening ;” * and if they are not, they will be judged of the Lord. But the commandment to children is not, “ Obey your father and mother *if* they are kind,” but, “ Children, obey your parents in the Lord : for this is *right*. Honour thy father and mother ; which is the first commandment with promise ; that it may be *well* with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” † Now, your dear little sister once remarked to me, on reading this verse,— “ But, mamma, I do not *want* to live long upon earth ; I had rather go to heaven and live with God.” I cannot wonder at such a wish. “ To depart, and be with Christ,” must ever be “ far better” than the greatest earthly happiness ; and there are some privileged and blessed spirits who are early called to enter into the joy of their Lord, and who, to use the beautiful words of the wise son of Sirach, “ being made per-

* Eph. vi. 9.

† Eph. vi. 1—3. .

fect in a short time, fulfil a long ;” and being “beloved” of God, and “living among sinners,” they are “translated, lest that guilt should pollute their souls, or deceit beguile their understanding ;” but long life is so constantly, so frequently promised in the Scriptures as a blessing, that doubtless we ought to be thankful when it is the will of God to preserve us, to serve him longer upon earth, and to glorify him in our bodies and our spirits, which are his. In short, the true Christian ought to be, as an excellent servant of God has said, “ready to depart, but willing to remain.”

DIALOGUE XLVI.

Mamma.—We are this morning, my dear little girl, to consider the sixth and seventh commandments; but as the full and spiritual meaning of these commandments has been explained to us by our Lord himself, in his sermon on the mount, we need not dwell long upon them. Our Saviour tells us, that “to be angry with our brother without a cause,” or to make use of opprobrious epithets, calling each other names, as children express it, is breaking the commandment, “Thou shalt do no murder;” and upon this subject of “calling names,” I will make a few remarks, because I am sure many little children need to be reminded that, from thought-

lessness in most instances rather than from real ill-nature, they too very frequently break the spirit of this commandment. One of the reasons why our Lord warns us against this evil practice of “calling names” is, because it excites the anger and evil passions of those thus offended; for we are not only not to be angry ourselves, but it is a sin to “cause our brother to offend.”* If you read carefully the 14th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the 6th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, you will see how careful St. Paul is not to put a “stumbling-block,” or “occasion to fall,” in the way of another. Now, when children, as they sometimes will for mere amusement, or what they call “good fun,” tease each other, by ridicule or laughter, or giving nick-names, or by any other method of tormenting, they break this command; for even the most gentle

* 1 Cor. viii. 13.

will, if long provoked, *feel* vexed, and the violent will be urged to anger, and perhaps revenge. “Woe” unto those who thus *cause* their brother to offend. “It is impossible,” says our Lord, in another place, “but that offences will come : but woe unto him *through whom* they come ! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”* There are some admirable lines by Miss Hannah More upon this subject of giving pain to others, which I dare say you remember :—

“ Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our miseries from our foible springs ;
Since life’s best joys consist of peace and ease,
And few can save or serve, but *all* may please :
Oh ! let the ungentle spirits learn from hence,
That small unkindness is a great offence.
Large bounties to bestow we seek in vain,
But *all* may shun the guilt of giving pain.”

* Luke xvii. 1, 2.

There are other lines, and the whole poem is admirable ; but you can read it and learn it for yourself, my love.

Caroline.—Thank you, dear mamma ; I like them very much, and they are very easy to understand.

Mamma.—In considering the seventh commandment, we should remember that “ our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost.” Any word, therefore, or thought, or look, which would “ grieve” that pure and Holy Spirit, must be avoided, lest we should force him to depart from us ; for it is said, “ My spirit shall not always strive with man.”* And should the fearful sentence once go forth, and the Holy Spirit depart, there remaineth for such an one only “ a fearful looking for of judgment.”† How dreadful the thought to have “ grieved” and “ resisted ” that Holy Spirit which would have guided us into all truth.‡

* Gen. vi. 3.

† Heb. x. 27.

‡ John xvi. 13.

Oh, let us, my dearest child, earnestly pray that in all things, in thought, in word, in deed, we may be pure “even as he is pure ;”* that “no corrupt communication may proceed out of our mouth ;” that we “grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption.”†

* 1 John iii. 3.

† Eph. iv. 29, 30.

DIALOGUE XLVII.

Mamma.—I dare say, my dear child, you may be thinking to yourself, “Well, I do not think I shall need much to be said to me about the eighth commandment, for it does not need much explanation to prove that it is a sin to steal; and I am not likely to be tempted to break this commandment, God having been so good as to place me in that situation in life that I have everything I want;” and yet, though you may not ever be tempted literally to “steal,” in the *usual* acceptation of the term, you may, as, alas! too many do, from *thoughtlessness*, break this commandment as effectually as if you took possession, like the thief,

of that which is not your own. I mean by going in debt, ordering, for it cannot be called purchasing things, without the means of paying for them. Is not this *in fact robbing* those persons of the profit they ought to receive from their labour, as much as if the goods had been taken from them by violence. Then, again, the *time* of those whose *bread* is dependent upon their daily labour, is of the same value to them as money; therefore we break this commandment whenever we needlessly rob them of *their time*, by keeping them waiting when they come for orders, or telling them to “call again,” because it may not be at the moment “*quite convenient*” to us to see them, or looking over their goods when we have no intention of purchasing any. These are ways by which the idle, and the frivolous, and the thoughtless, too frequently rob their neighbour, and thus break the commandment, “Thou shalt not steal.”

But we will, as we have upon all the other subjects upon which we have been discoursing, see what the Word of God says ; and sure I am, my precious child, that when you behold the light in which it is viewed by this unerring guide, you will not think it unnecessary to say fervently from the heart, “ Lord, have mercy upon me, and incline my heart to keep this law.” Let us turn to the 22d chapter of Jeremiah ; and now, my love, read the 13th verse.

Caroline.—“ Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong ; that useth his neighbour’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.”

Mamma.—Let us now look what is said by the law of Moses. We shall see we are commanded not only “ not to oppress the hireling in his wages,” but to pay him *immediately*. Find the 24th chapter of Deuteronomy, and read the 15th verse.

Caroline.—"At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee."

Mamma.—There is a similar passage in the Epistle of St. James, so we cannot excuse ourselves even if we would, by saying, "Ah, but that is the law of Moses." See what the New Testament says. Find the 5th chapter of St. James, and read the 4th verse.

Caroline.—"Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

Mamma.—There is also another way of transgressing this commandment, which is not considered, I am sure, in that light, by those who offend in these points—I mean, defrauding the Govern-

ment of the country in which they live, by withholding what is *due*, evading, if possible, the payment of duties and taxes, or purchasing goods which they are well aware have been smuggled into the country contrary to law ; in short, *every species* of *fraud* or dishonesty is forbidden by this commandment. But we may now, I think, proceed to consider, and in the same manner, the ninth commandment. What does this forbid ?

Caroline.—“ Bearing false witness against our neighbour.”

Mamma.—It would be taking only a limited view of the case, to say this refers only to bearing false witness against another in a court of justice. It includes every species of slander, either raising or repeating false or malicious reports. There is no character more mischievous in society than the slanderer. The texts against every approach to this sin are numerous, both in the Old Testament and the New ; so numerous, indeed, that

as it is getting late, we cannot look for them now. But there is one general rule, my dear child, which, if you carefully and watchfully follow, must prevent you from being guilty of this sin, and that is, never to speak of the absent *at all*, excepting you have something to say in praise, something which may be *useful*, to excite others to follow their good example. Do not *even listen*, if you can avoid it, to any ill-natured remark, or any unjust censures, upon the conduct of others. Remember who has said, “Judge not;”* “Condemn not;”† “Who art thou that judgest another?”‡ “to his own master he standeth or falleth.”§ Conduct may *appear* wrong or inconsistent to *you*, but you do not know the motives; you cannot tell what circumstances may have led to it; and to impute wrong motives to any one is to offend against that charity which

* Matt. vii. 1.

† Luke vi. 37.

‡ James iv. 11, 12.

§ Rom. xiv. 4.

“hopeth all things, believeth all things, and *thinketh no evil*.” Our sex is supposed to be prone to fall into this mean vice, and a love of slander, and gossip, and “tittle-tattle,” as this idle species of conversation is termed, to be more particularly a woman’s fault. It certainly ought not so to be, when one of the distinguishing characteristics of a good woman is, that “in her tongue is the law of kindness.”* Let this “law of kindness” be upon your tongue, my dear child, and this prayer,—“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips,”† be frequently offered up from your heart, and then you will never break this law, or “bear false witness against your neighbour.” Let us now turn to the tenth commandment; but it will not be necessary to dwell long upon this. We here see *plainly* expressed, that we may break the law of the *second* table, and sin against

* Prov. xxxi. 26.

† Psalm cxli. 3.

our *neighbour*, without committing any *open* offence against his person or property. The thoughts and desires of our hearts are to be placed under control ; for if the habit of coveting the possessions of others were indulged, envy, and malice, and hatred, would soon probably follow, and lead to murmuring and discontent, not only against our neighbour, but against the providence of the Almighty himself. But we will look for a few texts ; and if we diligently follow the exhortations and example of the apostle, we shall then be in no danger of breaking this commandment. See what is said to Timothy :—“ But godliness with *contentment* is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith *content*. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some *coveted* after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”* See, again, what he says to the Hebrews, the 13th chapter and the fifth verse,—“ Let your conversation be without covetousness ; and be content with such things as ye have : for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” But he teaches us by his example also, for, in his Epistle to the Philippians, he says, “ I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound : every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”† To attain to this happy and contented frame of mind, it is, however, needful that we be “*strengthened*” by

* 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.

† Phil. iv. 11—13.

Christ ; and to this commandment, as to all the others, let us earnestly respond, in the words of our Liturgy, “ Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in *our hearts*, we beseech thee.”

DIALOGUE XLVIII.



Mamma.—The commandments being delivered to the people, and having been responded to by them, the Rubric directs that one of the two prayers which follow, for the Queen, should be read. Read them both, my love, and see if there is anything in either of them you would wish explained.

Caroline.—No, mamma, I think not. I understand them both perfectly; and the only part which appears at all difficult, though I think I understood it before, is explained to little William by Mr. Hargrave.*

Mamma.—The Collect for the day follows; but it is not now my intention to explain any of them, but simply to

* See "First Sundays at Church."

point out to you, that the Epistle and Gospel which follow have generally been chosen in connexion with the Collect, and form together a most beautiful part of the service. When I first commenced this explanation for you, my dear child, I was not aware that there was even *one* book upon the subject suitable to children : since that time several have been published, and one, more especially, following the very plan which we had marked out for ourselves, comparing the Liturgy with the Scriptures, and finding out the texts which, in the Word of God, exemplify the doctrines. This book, which you are now perfectly competent to understand,* renders it unnecessary that I should say anything about the Collects, excepting that I will just remark, that they are proved to have been used in our churches in England, with the Epistles and Gospels, as at present arranged, for *twelve hundred years*, and also point out, that there is a custom

* “ The Liturgy compared with the Bible.”

observed in all our churches, which, by some strange neglect, has been omitted in our Prayer-books. Do you remember to what I allude?

Caroline.—Yes, dear mamma; you mean the custom of all the congregation rising and standing, when the clergyman says where the Gospel is taken from; and after he has named the chapter and verse, saying, “Glory be to thee, O Lord.”

Mamma.—I am glad that the custom, which is a very ancient one, has been continued. It seems so proper to return thanks to God for the privilege of thus hearing the Gospel read. After the reading of the Gospel, what follows next?

Caroline.—The Creed, called the Nicene Creed. Why is it called so, mamma?

Mamma.—It was called so after the city of Nice; because, in consequence of Arius, a discontented priest of Alexandria, having maintained that Christ was not a partaker of the Godhead, but

only a human being more holy than others, the Emperor Constantine summoned a Council at Nice, in Bithynia, to settle the disputes and schisms in the Church which this opinion had occasioned. There, in the year 325, 300 bishops condemned this doctrine of Arius, and this Creed, which was considered fuller and more explanatory than the Apostles' Creed, was framed ; but as it is essentially the same, I need not say more, but refer you to our former conversations on the Apostles' Creed. But little remains for us now, my dear child, to consider, as my intention is only to explain that part of the service read at morning and evening prayers. We will now turn to the evening service, and pause only at those parts in which it differs from that used in the morning.

Caroline.—There is no difference, mamma, till you come to that hymn called “ The Song of the blessed Virgin Mary.”

Mamma.—This hymn, being one of praise, is said or sung after the lesson has been read. “The blessed Virgin,” says Comber, “*then* experienced God’s goodness to his servants, and saw the accomplishment of all his promises, and in this form she expressed her joy and gratitude ; and when we hear in the lesson like examples of his mercy, and are told of those prophecies and promises which are now fulfilled in Christ’s birth, we may be expected to rejoice with her in the same words.” Our souls ought, indeed, to magnify the Lord, and our spirits to rejoice in God our Saviour ; but there is one expression in this hymn which, from the great importance attached to it by the Romish Church, it is as well we should again dwell upon for a moment, though I have already explained to you the sense in which alone I think it should be used. Mary says, “From henceforth all generations shall call me *blessed* :” and “highly” indeed

was she “favoured,” and “blessed” indeed may we well call her; but the Roman Catholics, alas! not only call her “blessed,” but transgress the “first and great commandment,” by paying towards her an idolatrous worship. They pray to her, as if she were almighty; they worship her, as having divine power; they place her above our Lord and Saviour; and in some of their prayers, beseech her to “command her Son” to have mercy upon us. Read the hymn, my love, and tell me if there is any other verse which you would wish explained.

Caroline.—It is a beautiful hymn, mamma, and I understand why Mary should “rejoice” and be glad, with a sort of wondering joy, that God should be pleased to regard one in so humble and lowly a station, and exalt her to be the mother of the Saviour. I understand that she knew the promise was now about to be fulfilled, which had

been made to Abraham ; but what does she mean when she says, “ He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.” Does she speak that of herself and the rich of those days, or does she mean all rich people ?

Mamma.—I remember that dear Amelia once asked me this same question, and said, that she hoped it was not wrong to *wish*, if that were the meaning, to be poor, for she should not like to be “ sent empty away,” rightly supposing that, if the expression had a spiritual signification, the hunger spoken of must be hunger after righteousness, and the “ good things” promised, the blessings of God’s Holy Spirit and his grace and favour ; and that if these blessings were promised to the poor more than to the rich, it would indeed be good to be poor. There are so many passages of the Bible that prove the danger of riches ; our Saviour himself telling us

that, without the *especial* grace of God, it is impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven ; that I can quite understand the feelings which led the early Christians that had possessions to sell them, and bring the money to the apostles to be distributed : but, alas ! in this present evil world, the continuance of that happy state of society, when “ The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul : neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own ; but they had all things common,”* was found to be impossible ; and we soon find directions given that collections should be made for “ the poor,” for God himself has declared, that “ the poor shall never cease out of the land ;”† and our Saviour says, “ Ye have the poor always with you.”‡ “ Rich and poor” are therefore to meet together

* Acts iv. 32.

† Deut. xv. 11.

‡ Matt. xxvi. 11.

till the end of the world ; and our duty is, to be contented to “ abide ” in that station in which God has placed us. If we are poor, let us comfort ourselves with all the gracious promises made throughout the Scriptures towards the poor, “ Hath not God chosen the poor of this world *rich in faith*, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him ? ” * not forgetting that the mere fact of our being poor in this world will not entitle us to any reward hereafter, unless we have been followers of him through whom alone we can, whether rich or poor, be saved. If we are rich, let us remember what we have is not *our own* ; we are only the stewards of him from whom is the “ power to get wealth,” † and to whom we must account for this and every other talent that he has committed to our trust. If our wealth is hoarded, let us hear what is the fearful sentence,—

* James ii. 5.

† Deut. viii. 18.

“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the *rust* of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.”* If it is squandered in selfish indulgence, in “faring sumptuously every day,” while the poor are forgotten and neglected, we are warned by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, of the judgment we must expect hereafter, “Charge them that are rich in this world,” says St. Paul, “that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay

* James v. 1—3.

hold on eternal life.”* But I have wandered away from your question, which was, what Mary meant by saying, “He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.” I think it probable she only meant to express her gratitude and wonder that she, a lowly, humble, obscure, and, perhaps, despised maiden, should have been preferred to the high and noble daughters of Israel, who all aspired and hoped to be the mother of him, whom they expected would come as a king, with earthly pomp and splendour. I cannot myself give any further explanation.

Caroline.—Thank you, dear mamma.

Mamma.—What follows next in order, my dear child? Read the Rubric.

Caroline.—“Or else this Psalm, except it be on the 19th day of the month, when it is read in the ordinary course of the Psalms.” And then follows the

* 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

98th Psalm, mamma ; but I do not think it is often read.

Mamma.—If the lesson read should give an account of some great deliverance granted to the people of God, the 98th Psalm is then very appropriate, and is sometimes used. After the second lesson, that beautiful hymn of good old Simeon is read, and always to me appears peculiarly appropriate to the evening service, the approach of night, as it were, being a symbol of the hour of death. Each evening should find us *ready*, should it be the will of God, to exclaim, “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace : for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” The 67th Psalm, which is also sometimes read instead of the “ Song of Simeon,” is a most beautiful and appropriate hymn of praise ; but it must be getting late. We must finish our conversation for this day, and prepare to sing our praises in the great congregation.

DIALOGUE XLIX.

Caroline.—There is no difference, dear mamma, in the morning and evening service, after the 67th Psalm, till the Second Collect at evening prayer. In the Rubric this is called the “Collect for Peace,” and so is that in the morning service, read after the Collect for the day, and yet they are not alike.

Mamma.—No, my love, they are not ; and in the “little book,” Comber gives a very good explanation, I think, of the reason of the difference. He says,—“Peace is so desirable a blessing, we cannot ask it too often ; and since there are two kinds of peace, external and internal peace, we beg outward peace in the morning, to secure us from the troubles of the world, in which the

business of the day engageth us, and inward peace in the evening, to comfort and quiet our minds when we are to take our rest." If you read this very beautiful Collect, you will see that the peace here prayed for is inward peace, "that peace which the *world cannot* give," but which our Lord promised to his disciples when he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."* "The work of *righteousness* is *peace*,"† Isaiah tells us; therefore we pray that our hearts "may be set to obey God's commandments;" for, as the prophet adds, "the *effect* of *righteousness* shall be quietness and assurance for ever." What is the third Collect called?

Caroline.—"The Collect for Aid against all Perils." It begins, "Lighten our darkness."

Mamma.—This needs no explanation. The expression is taken from the 18th Psalm, the 28th verse. David says,

* John xiv. 27.

† Isaiah xxxii. 17.

“The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness,” and means, doubtless, both literal and spiritual darkness. We pray God to protect us from all the dangers of the night, from all the “terrors of darkness ;” we commend ourselves to Him who “neither slumbers nor sleeps,”* and to whom “darkness and light are both alike.”† We need not either, I think, dwell upon the next Collects : we know that we are expressly commanded to pray for “kings, and all that are put in authority,”‡ and I do not think we could possibly do so in more beautiful language, or words more truly scriptural ; indeed, almost every expression is taken from the Bible. If you would like it, we can look for some of the texts from which they are taken.

Caroline.—Yes, if you please, dearest mamma ; I should like to find them.

Mamma.—Look for the First Epistle

* Psalm cxxi. 3, 4. † Psalm cxxxix. 11, 12.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 2.

to Timothy, the sixth chapter and the fifteenth verse, and read that and the following verse.

Caroline.—"Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

Mamma.—We find the same title, "King of kings, and Lord of lords," given also in the Revelation to the Most High. We might find many verses to prove that he "beholds all the dwellers upon earth," but one text will now be sufficient. Look for the 15th of Proverbs, and read the third verse.

Caroline.—"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Mamma.—To this Almighty Ruler, then, we pray, that he will with favour

behold our gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria ; that he will replenish her with the grace of his Holy Spirit ; so that in spite of the various temptations which surround a throne, she may ever walk in his way. We request for her “ plenteously ” all “ heavenly gifts,” and that he “ will grant her health and wealth,” that means, prosperity ; that should she have enemies, which God forbid, for we pray always for “ peace among all nations,” that she may “ vanquish and overcome them ; ” and, finally, that she may attain everlasting happiness. It is, I think, and also the one which follows it, a beautiful prayer, and from my heart, and from the hearts of thousands, is it breathed for our beloved Queen, and all those dear to her.

DIALOGUE L.

Mamma.—What is the next prayer, my love, which is read after that for the Royal Family?

Caroline.—A Prayer for the Clergy and People, mamma. You told me before, these prayers were read when the Litany was *not* read.

Mamma.—Yes, my dear child; and having, when we were conversing on the Litany, pointed out the duty of offering up these prayers, we need not now say more; but I will read to you what appears to me a very clear and plain—so plain that I should think even a child can understand it—explanation of this prayer by Archbishop Secker:—“ In this prayer we beseech Almighty God,

that he ‘who alone worketh great marvels,’ who hath in all ages marvellously protected his Church against the devil and wicked men ; who endued his apostles with marvellous and miraculous gifts on the day of Pentecost, and by their means many others ; who doth and ever will produce marvellous effects on the hearts of believers, by the ministry of the Word and sacraments ; and who only can do such things, would ‘send down the healthful,’ that is, the healing, strengthening, and saving ‘Spirit of his grace’ on all bishops and curates, persons to whom the cure or care of souls is intrusted ; for this the word ‘curates’ signifies throughout the Prayer-book, and likewise on ‘all congregations committed to their charge.’ And we further beseech him, not only to bestow on them at first good dispositions, but that they may ‘truly’ and lastingly ‘please him’ to ‘pour upon them his continual blessing,’ like a kindly ‘dew’ descending

from above. 'For neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.' " *

Caroline.—Thank you, dear mamma; it is quite plain and easy to understand: but when you mention anybody I always wish to know something about them. I should like to hear something about Archbishop Secker, if you please, mamma, if you can tell me anything about him.

Mamma.—He was a learned and a good man, who appears from youth to old age to have "walked in all the commandments of God blameless." He was an exemplary country clergyman, and would have been contented as a parish priest to have lived and died, and as such, he said, he passed the happiest hours of his life; but it pleased God to call him to higher duties, and he died Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1768. I

* 1 Cor. iii. 7.

might tell you more than this, but I had rather you should, as you grow older, read for yourself the lives of all who were eminent for wisdom and virtue. I know no reading more delightful than that of Christian biography, or the memoirs of eminent Christians. After the prayer for the clergy, what follows ?

Caroline.—Why, mamma, the Rubric says, “ A Collect or Prayer for all conditions of men, to be used at such times when the Litany is not appointed to be read.”

Mamma.—It was on this account called sometimes the “ Lesser Litany ;” and having already seen that we are commanded to make “ supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanks” for all men, while conversing on the Litany, all that is necessary now is to read this carefully over, and see if there is anything on which you would wish for information.

Caroline.—No thank you, dearest mamma, I understand it perfectly, for

you have explained the expressions, “saving health,” and “catholic Church,” before.

Mamma.—After this prayer follows the Thanksgiving and the prayer of St. Chrysostom, concluding, as in the morning, with the blessing, or rather prayer, as the minister includes himself with the people—“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.” Having now brought the usual services of the Church to a close, there only remains for us to examine what are called the occasional prayers and thanksgivings. You may remember that in the beautiful prayer of Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, he supposes there will be *special* prayers offered up in times of unusual distress or calamities, “when heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee.” “If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting,

mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillars; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be,"* in all these cases he concludes that prayer will be made; they have therefore been added to our Liturgy: but so great has been the mercy of the Almighty towards this favoured country, that they have seldom been used, some of them, it is said, "not within the remembrance of, more than the present generation." And oh! how grateful should we be for these blessings; for those who have been, as I have, in a country where the "heavens are frequently as brass, and the earth as iron,"† can fully enter into and understand the beautiful and frequent allusions made in the Scriptures to "rain," to "water," to "dew." The climate of New South Wales must bear a strong resemblance to that of Judea. It is the land of the vine, and the olive, and the

* 1 Kings viii. 35—40. † Deut. xxviii. 23, 24.

fig-tree ; at least, all these fruits, though not indigenous to the soil—that means, growing naturally without cultivation—yet flourish and grow there with little trouble : the land, too, may be said to be “ a beautiful land,” furnishing corn and wine ; the flocks also, and herds, multiplying exceedingly : but it is subject to dreadful droughts. Month after month, even year after year, sometimes passes without rain. During the time we lived there, one of these periods of death and affliction was sent upon the land : the rivers dried up, the cattle died for want of water ; many farms were obliged to be abandoned ; in short, the beautiful and affecting descriptions given by the Prophets Jeremiah and Joel were almost literally fulfilled before our eyes. Turn, my dear child, to the fourteenth chapter of Jeremiah, and read from the first to the seventh verse.

Caroline.—“ The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the

dearth. Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish ; they are black unto the ground ; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters ; they came to the pits, and found no water ; they returned with their vessels empty ; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads. Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the ploughmen were ashamed, they covered their heads. Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass. And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons ; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass."

Mamma.—This is, indeed, an affecting picture ;—"the little ones," even of the nobles, going to seek water and returning with empty vessels ; the ploughmen covering their heads and being ashamed ;—meaning, I suppose,

to express grief and repentance for those “sins and iniquities” which, the same prophet tells us, was the cause of the “former and the latter rain” being withheld. There is also another most striking description of the sufferings of the poor cattle during such a visitation in the first chapter of Joel. The whole chapter is most beautiful, but we will now only refer to the four last verses. Read them, dear child.

Caroline.—“The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath

devoured the pastures of the wilderness."

Mamma.—This description was, during the time I speak of, verified in every respect ; for from whatever cause, whether from the wood being so dry that the branches of the trees rubbing against each other in the wind they caught fire, or from the fires lit by the natives communicating to the dried grass, I cannot tell you, but fires in the woods were frequent. I have seen miles of country on fire ; and nothing could look more desolate than the bare and blackened trunks of the trees, extending as far as the eye could reach. Under such circumstances, I need not tell you, that those who "feared the Lord" were glad to read in the churches, and in their houses, the prayers which are appointed in our Liturgy for "rain," and "the time of dearth and famine;" and for *their sakes* doubtless it was that God was pleased occasionally to send refreshing

showers, which delayed for a time the extreme of misery ; but it was long, very long, alas ! before the people in general were roused from their indifference, or appeared to remember and cry out, “ Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain ? or can the heavens give showers ? art not thou he, O Lord our God ? therefore we will wait upon thee : for thou hast made all these things.”* At length, very shortly after the arrival of the excellent Arch-deacon Broughton, now the zealous and devoted Bishop of Australia, from England, he proposed that a day for a solemn and general humiliation and earnest supplication to the Almighty should be appointed and held throughout the whole colony. Papa immediately gave the necessary orders ; a beautiful Form of Prayer was arranged for the occasion by the Bishop, and a day named. The morning came ; and I cannot describe

* Jeremiah xiv. 22.

the feelings which arose in my heart on observing, that while the people, in thronging crowds, pressed forwards towards the houses of God, the heavens “were black with clouds.”* While we were “yet speaking,” God was mercifully pleased to answer our prayers, and “there was a great rain.”* The rain poured down in torrents before we left the church, and many a heart, I hope, *felt* that the Lord was indeed the Lord Almighty; and many a grateful tongue exclaimed, “Let thy name be magnified: for thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshedest it when it was weary!” But there was an awful occurrence connected with this period, which I must not pass over, proving, that though the Lord is “merciful and gracious, *long-suffering*, and *abundant* in goodness and truth, keeping *mercy* for *thousands*, forgiving iniquity and transgression and

* 1 Kings xviii. 45.

sin, yet he will by no means clear the guilty.”* A few days after this great mercy shown to us, as a people, a wretched individual was driving a loaded waggon through the street in Parramatta ; it was drawn by bullocks. In consequence of the long drought, the poor animals, from having been half-starved, were so weak, they proceeded but slowly. The roads were very heavy from the recent rain ; and at last, some trifling impediment presenting itself, they stopped. The brutal driver began to goad them on, uttering horrible execrations and blasphemous expressions about the rain which had fallen. I believe some one standing by remonstrated with him on his cruelty towards the poor animals, and more especially rebuked his impious ingratitude towards the Lord, who had thus bountifully refreshed the earth and delivered us from the impending famine. The un-

* Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7.

happy man only became more violent ; but while pouring forth blasphemies against his Maker, and uttering curses on all around, he fell down seized with locked jaw, was conveyed immediately to the hospital, which was near, and died in a few hours, never having spoken again.

Caroline.—That was a very shocking, a very awful occurrence, mamma.

Mamma.—It was, indeed, my dearest child. I do not like to dwell upon it ; but would rather turn once more to the contemplation of the mercies of our God, and the delightful proofs that He is a God that answereth prayer. The colony, some time after we had left it, was visited by another severe drought : again was the land “laid desolate,” and “the herds of cattle were perplexed ;” and your dear cousin Fitzroy told me, that his mother and aunt Susan used to go to their rooms “to cry” when they heard the cattle moaning ; and doubtless, too,

not only to weep, but to pray : but, as on the former occasion, the people “ cried unto the Lord in their distress, and the Lord heard them.”* I had an impression on my mind that the same striking manifestation of His mercy, in *immediately* answering the prayers of His people, had been made in this as in the former instance ; and I therefore wrote to your dear aunt Sophy, to inform me if I were correct in this supposition. I will read you her reply :—“ You are quite right in your supposition regarding the rain having fallen the *very day* the prayers were especially offered up to implore God’s mercy towards us. It made a deep and affecting impression on the minds of *all* ; and my children, I believe, will never forget it. I read your note aloud at the breakfast table, and Fitzroy immediately exclaimed, ‘ Oh yes, mamma, do you not recollect how fast we were obliged to run, to escape

* Psalm cvii. 6.

from being wet through, as we were returning from church ?' I *did* recollect it, and trust I shall *ever* do so." So you see, my dear child, that although in this happy country the prayer for "Rain," and those to be used in the time of "Dearth and Famine," are but seldom required, there *are* countries where our beautiful Liturgy, and the services of our Church, are used by those who, though scattered through many lands, still love to worship God in the language of their forefathers, and in which these supplications and prayers are frequently needed, when the "heaven is shut up and there is no rain."

DIALOGUE LI.

Mamma.—What Collect, dearest Caroline, have we to consider next ?

Caroline.—The Collect for “ Fair Weather ” follows after that for “ Rain,” mamma.

Mamma.—There have been seasons, even within your own recollection, I should think, when this prayer has been offered up in our churches ; for the precious fruits of the earth are, in this climate, more frequently injured by too much rain than by drought : but I do not think you can require any explanation of this Collect. You, of course, remember the promise here alluded to ?

Caroline.—Oh, yes, mamma ; that given to Noah in the ninth chapter of

Genesis ; it is in the eleventh verse :—
“ Neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.”

Mamma.—It has been said by some, that until the flood there had never been any rain upon the earth. In the second chapter of Genesis, it is said, “ There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.”* This mist, they suppose, fell again in dew, sufficiently abundant to water the ground ; and this supposition is, I fancy, grounded upon the idea of the rainbow having been now *first* seen. When God said, “ I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud,” the words may certainly be understood as speaking of something *then to be* formed ; but whether this be the case or not, with what feelings of

* Gen. ii. 6.

holy gratitude and awe must Noah have gazed upon this beautiful emblem of God's mercy. A devout Jew, it is said, always utters an exclamation of grateful joy when he beholds a rainbow ; and with such feelings also I think should we regard it—a type, as it is, of the covenanted mercies of God. There is, in the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, a glorious promise made to the Church of God, that whenever you see a rainbow it would be well to remember, and then the lovely colours would be gazed on with higher and holier feelings than those of mere admiration. Let us read the ninth and tenth verses.

Caroline.—“ For this is as the waters of Noah unto me : for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth ; so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee,

neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”

Mamma.—Let then the rainbow, my dear child, ever recal to your mind that “better covenant,”* the “covenant of peace,” the “peace of God, through Christ Jesus.”† Let us now turn to the next Collect. What follows that for “Fair Weather?”

Caroline.—There are two Collects for the same occasion, mamma;—for a “Time of Dearth and Famine.”

Mamma.—The very circumstance of these prayers being in our Prayer-books ought to excite our gratitude; for they must recal to our minds the great mercy of God to us as a nation. Year after year passes on, and these prayers are never required; yet we read, not only in the Scriptures, but in history, frequent mention of “grievous famines,” in lands, too, as fruitful as our own:

* Heb. viii. 6.

† Phil. iv. 7.

but a “fruitful land maketh He barren, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.”* Let us, then, earnestly pray, that our land may be a land wherein dwelleth righteousness; a land where God is praised; and “then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.”† I do not think that any explanation of the prayers themselves are needed. They acknowledge that the iniquity of the nation justly deserves punishment, and implore the mercy of God, appealing to him as our “heavenly *Father*,” in the first prayer, and our “merciful *Father*,” in the second, to remove his judgments from us, for the “love of Jesus Christ our Lord.” What is the next prayer?

Caroline.—That “In the Time of War and Tumults.”

Mamma.—God has been graciously pleased to hear the prayers offered up so constantly in our Litany and Collects,

* Psalm cvii. 34.

† Psalm lxxvii. 6.

and has blessed our country with a long and happy peace, and has also preserved us from any serious or prolonged tumults at home, so that more than a quarter of a century has passed since this beautiful prayer has been used in our churches. In that solemn address, to which we have so often referred, offered up by Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, he says, “When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again into the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.” And, again, “If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the Lord toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name:

then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.”* And you will find throughout the Scriptures that whenever the people, or their king, sought “help”† of God, he always heard and delivered them from their enemies. Should we, then, for our sins be punished by wars or tumults, let us remember, that God alone can give victory ; let us, with deep and earnest devotion offer up this prayer, so that we may overcome our enemies rather by “praying than fighting.” The next prayer is that to be used “in time of any common plague or sickness.” Although we have not, as a nation, been visited since the time of Charles the Second with the disease called “the Plague,” the dreadful account of which makes one shudder with horror even to read it, we have seen a frightful malady, unknown before, excepting in Eastern

* 1 Kings viii. 33, 34, 44, 45.

† 2 Chron. xx. 4; 2 Chron. xii. 6, 7.

climates or in the tropics, the cholera, bring death and sorrow to many a house, and scatter dismay and fear around. I could tell you things of which I was witness many years ago; but it is a painful subject; I would rather not dwell upon it, excepting to draw from it this lesson, to “watch and pray,” that we may ever be found ready and willing to depart; then we “shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day.”* The prayers which follow are those to be said in the Ember weeks. There appears to be different reasons assigned by various writers for the appointment of these four different fasts, and different meanings are also given to the word Ember, some supposing it to signify ashes, from the custom observed in early times of sprinkling the head over with ashes. In

* Psalm xci. 5, 6.

seasons of deep humiliation, Job says, “Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”* And there are various allusions to this custom in different parts of the Scriptures; while some writers have derived the word from one denoting a course or rotation, and suppose it meant that the periods alluded to came in regular succession; but whatever be the meaning of the word, the custom of observing these Ember weeks is said to be so ancient, not in England only, but throughout the western world, that some say they were appointed by the apostles; and for this appointment also various reasons are assigned. The Ember days are, the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, Whitsunday, the 14th of September, and the 13th of December. And occurring thus at the commencement of the four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, and winter, has suggested the

* Job xlii. 6.

thought, that one of the original purposes for which they were appointed was, that each season might be begun with prayer and fasting ; but there is nothing in the two Collects to justify this conclusion—they express but one object. Look to the Rubric, and you will see the directions are, “ In the Ember weeks to be said every day for those that are to be admitted into Holy Orders ;” and they rather prove that it was customary at these seasons (it having been very early agreed upon in the Church to have *appointed times*) to ordain persons to “ serve in the sacred ministry of the Church.” When we consider that one of the greatest judgments that can fall upon a nation is, that the prophets should prophesy falsely, and the “ people love to have it so,” should we not earnestly pray that it may please the Lord of the harvest to send *faithful* labourers into his vineyard. In the second chapter of Malachi there is a beautiful description

of what the character of a priest should be. Let us see what is there said : “ The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips : he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth : for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.”* In these Collects, for there are two, either of which may be read, we earnestly pray that the Almighty will so “ guide and govern the minds of the bishops and pastors of the flock.” The Church, you see, is here compared, following the language of the Scriptures, to a flock of sheep under the charge of a shepherd, “ that they may lay hands suddenly on no man.” Do you remember, my love, where this expression is taken from ?

Caroline.—Yes, mamma : St. Paul says to Timothy, “ Lay hands suddenly

* Mal. ii. 6, 7.

on no man.”* And I think I understand what it means. I suppose the bishop, when he ordains a minister, lays his hand upon his head, as he does upon the head of a child at confirmation.

Mamma.—Yes, my love; and in so doing, the example of the apostles is followed; for you may remember frequent mention is made of this custom in the Acts of the Apostles; and, doubtless, they had a command from the Lord so to do, as Moses had, when he appointed Joshua to be his successor. If you turn to the twenty-seventh chapter of Numbers, you will find the Lord himself commands Moses to observe this form, “And Moses did as the Lord commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: and he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.”† The direction not to do so

* 1 Tim. v. 22.

† Numb. xxvii. 22, 23.

“suddenly,” means, of course, that due care shall be taken, as is afterwards expressed in the prayer, “that they *faithfully* and *wisely* make choice of *fit* persons to perform these holy functions.” Having implored the guidance of the Almighty in the choice of such persons, the prayer proceeds to ask for a blessing on the individuals themselves, that they may, “both by their life and doctrine, set forth the glory of God” and “forward the salvation of men, through Jesus Christ,” or, as expressed in the second Collect, they may be so “replenished with ‘truth’ of ‘doctrine,’ and ‘endued’ with ‘innocency of life,’ that they may ‘faithfully serve’ God, to the glory of his great name and the benefit of the Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Surely to such a prayer every one must from the heart add an Amen. There remains now, my dear child, only two more prayers to be considered ; and they need but little remark. The one

that follows is entitled "A Prayer that may be said after any of the former." It is a most beautiful and comprehensive petition, implying, that so much of sin, and imperfection, and weariness, and inattention have mingled with our prayers, that we could scarcely expect our "humble petitions" would be received, did we not know from his own holy Word that it is the "nature and property" of God "ever to have mercy and to forgive;" and that though we be "tied and bound," as if in chains and bondage for our sins, his "pitifulness" and "great mercy" can loose us, for the sake of our Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ. This little prayer is a very appropriate one to add frequently to our private petitions. The prayer which follows is a "Prayer for the High Court of Parliament to be read during their Session." It is so perfectly plain in its language, that it can need no explanation. And we have already so often discussed

the duty of praying for *all* placed in authority, that we can have no doubt as to the propriety of offering up especial prayers for those assembled to make those laws by which the nation is to be governed, that all their “consultations” may be directed to that which shall most promote the glory of God and the good of the Church and nation, and that “peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations.” We need not, my dear child, do more than read over the occasional thanksgivings which are, of course, appointed to be read when it has pleased the Almighty to hear the prayers of his people, and to be unto them a “strong tower of defence against their enemies,”* or to still the “outrage of a violent and unruly people,”† or to remove from them some “dreadful

* See the Thanksgiving “For Peace and Deliverance from our Enemies.”

† Thanksgiving “For public Peace at Home.”

visitation” * or “contagious sickness,” and to “restore the voice of joy and health into their dwellings.” Under any of these circumstances, to offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and to laud and magnify his holy name, would be such a service of delight, that cold indeed must be the heart that does not at once see the “reasonableness” of this part of our service.

Having now, my dear child, by the blessing of God, been permitted to bring these conversations to a conclusion, through many interruptions of sickness and in much weakness of body and of mind, I earnestly pray that he will bless this attempt, feeble though it be, to give glory to His holy name, and that you, my precious child, and all who may read it, may find the service of his house a service of delight, and rejoicing in the work of prayer and praise in his courts below,

* See the Thanksgiving “For Deliverance from the Plague or other common Sickness.”

may be found worthy to join that bright-robed throng that shall, in the courts above, sing praises, and be “glad and rejoice”* before the throne,† crying, “Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb,” for “ever and ever.”

But before we conclude the subject altogether, I will add a few remarks upon the remainder of the service. God has said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer ;” but it has also pleased him to appoint, as a means of grace, the preaching of his Word. “Go ye,” said our Lord to the apostles, “and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Innumerable texts might be found to prove that preaching is the ordinary and appointed means whereby souls are converted and brought to the knowledge of the Saviour : a few only will suffice for us now. St. Paul says, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the

* Rev. xix. 7.

† Rev. vii. 9, 10.

Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?* And again, “It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”† Since then, my love, we find *preaching* is one of those appointed means from which, if rightly used, we may expect a blessing, let us take heed “*how we hear.*” “He that heareth you,” said our Lord, when he sent his disciples to *preach* “into every city and every place,” “heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.”‡ We are told that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, “that *she attended* unto the things that were spoken of Paul.”§ Pray, therefore, my dear child, when you kneel

• Rom. x. 13, 14.

† 1 Cor. i. 21.

‡ Luke x. 1, 16.

§ Acts xvi. 14.

down before the sermon, that God would open your heart, and cause you to *attend*, that the words spoken may profit *you*, and do not fear but that you will learn some lesson that shall be for your good. As the excellent George Herbert says, “If the sermon should be really so dull and tedious that you can learn nothing, then it takes a text and *preaches patience*.” But this saying can hardly be applicable to a child; for it can surely scarcely be that any sermon can be preached from which an attentive, humble-minded, teachable child, may not receive instruction. The text *must be* the Word of God, and that may be laid up in the memory and pondered upon in the heart. Carefully watch against the *very first temptation*, to listen in a temper of mind to look for faults, to criticise words, tone of voice, or gestures; and as you may remember your excellent pastor once said, to think more “what *manner* of

man was it that told you these words,"* than to attend to the message he brings. To such the words of the Lord, spoken to his prophet, are applicable; the preacher is to them only "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument;" and I fear, too often we may add the remainder of the verse,—“They hear the words, but they do them not.”† Listen, my child, with an anxious desire to learn and to bring home some truth from the Word of God which shall profit *yourself*, and doubt not but you shall receive a blessing. After the sermon is ended, it is usual in some churches to rise when the clergyman ascribes glory to the Holy Trinity, and to *kneel* when he says, “Let us *pray*.” In others, all the congregation kneel immediately. The former would say, that it is the usual custom to rise at the offering of

* 2 Kings i. 7.

† Ezek. xxxiii. 22.

praise as prescribed by the Rubric ; while the latter would plead, perhaps, the example of the angels. St. John tells us,—“ And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *fell upon their faces* and worshipped God, saying, Amen : blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”* But in all cases where, like this, it can only be considered as a *non-essential ceremony*, it is better, I think, to conform to what appears to be the *usual custom* of the congregation, so that “ all things may be done decently and in order.”† Do you remember, my dear child, that hymn we sometimes sing in church ?—

“ Lord of the Sabbath ! hear us pray,
In this thy house, on this thy day.
Accept as grateful sacrifice
The songs which from thy temple rise.
Thine *earthly Sabbaths*, Lord, we love ;
But there’s a nobler rest above.”

* Rev. vii. 11, 12. † 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

As it is said of the “earthly Sabbaths,” so may it be of the worship of God in *earthly* temples; for though even here we may exclaim, “A day in thy courts is better than a thousand,” and may rejoice when we are called to “go up unto the house of the Lord,” a time is coming, and by all the “signs of the times,” we may hope will “come quickly,”* when in the “new heaven” and the “new earth” we shall “join in a nobler worship,” and be found, I humbly trust, through the merits of our Saviour, worthy to serve him where there will be no more temple; for we are told, “And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are THE TEMPLE of it; and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”†

* Rev. xxii. 20.

† Rev. xxi. 22, 23.

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